United Nations

Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development

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REPORT OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AN AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development was established by the Assembly in its resolution 49/126 of 19 December 1994. Under the chairmanship of the President of the Assembly, it began its work in early 1995 to elaborate an agenda for development. Pursuant to Assembly decisions 49/497 of 14 September 1995 and 50/490 of 16 September 1996, the Working Group continued its work during the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions of the Assembly.

2. On 20 June 1996, the Ad Hoc Working Group adopted its report (A/AC.250/1 (Parts I and II)) and recommended to the Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/126 of 19 December 1994, in which it decided to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group of the Assembly to elaborate further an action-oriented, comprehensive agenda for development, which should begin its work as early as possible in 1995 under the chairmanship of the President of the Assembly,

1. Takes note of the report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development;

2. Adopts the Agenda for Development, as set forth in the annex to the present resolution.

Annex

AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Development is one of the main priorities of the United Nations. Development is a multidimensional undertaking to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development.

Sustained economic growth is essential to the economic and social development of all countries, in particular developing countries. Through such growth, which should be broadly based so as to benefit all people, countries will be able to improve the standards of living of their people through the eradication of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, the provision of adequate shelter and secure employment for all, and the preservation of the integrity of the environment.

Democracy, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society, and effective participation by civil society are also an essential part of the necessary foundations for the realization of social and people centred sustainable development.

The empowerment of women and their full participation on a basis of equality in all spheres of society is fundamental for development.

2. Building on the outcome of recent United Nations conferences and other relevant agreements, the Agenda for Development aims at invigorating a renewed and strengthened partnership for development, based on the imperatives of mutual benefits and genuine interdependence. It testifies to the renewed commitments of all countries to mobilize national and international efforts in pursuit of sustainable development and to revitalize and strengthen international cooperation for development. In that context, the Agenda for Development acknowledges the primacy of national policy and measures in the development process and calls for action towards a dynamic and enabling international economic environment, including, inter alia, an open, rule based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent, and predictable multilateral trading system and promotion of investment and transfer of technology and knowledge, as well as for an enhanced international cooperation in the mobilization and provision of financial resources for development from all sources, the strategy for durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries and the efficient use of available resources.

I. SETTING AND OBJECTIVES

A. Setting

1. Development, peace and security

3. Peace and development are closely interrelated and mutually supportive. Development should also be pursued in its own right. Development is indispensable to the achievement and maintenance of peace and security both within and among nations. Without development there can be neither peace nor security. There is complementarity between the processes related to the Agenda

for Development and the Agenda for Peace. For peace and stability to endure, national action and effective international cooperation are required to promote a better life for all in larger freedom, a critical element of which is the eradication of poverty.

4. Development cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Under conditions of war, and during periods of short-term emergencies and humanitarian needs, development efforts are often neglected, diminished or abandoned. Excessive military expenditures, arms trade, investment for arms production, acquisition and stockpiling have a negative impact on development prospects. With the relaxation of international tensions the opportunity exists for reducing, as appropriate, military expenditures and investments for arms production and acquisition, consistent with national security requirements, in order to increase resources for social and economic development.

(a) Globalization, regional cooperation and interdependence: the need for a commitment for partnership

5. Profound changes have occurred, especially coupled with the end of the cold war, which question some of the traditional ways of addressing the challenge of development.

6. One such increasingly important change affecting all countries is the process of market-driven globalization, including due to rapid progress in information exchange and telecommunications. Globalization encompasses the varying degrees of increasing integration of world markets of goods, services, capital, technology, and labour. This has generated greater openness, freer movement of factors of production and created greater opportunities for international cooperation. Greatly increased trade and capital flows and technological developments open new opportunities for growth of the world economy, particularly in developing countries. Wider dissemination of ideas, cultures, and lifestyles brought about by innovations in transportation and communications are also important manifestations of the globalization process. Globalization permits countries to share experiences and to learn from one another's achievements and difficulties, and promote a cross-fertilization of ideals, cultural values and aspirations, taking into account the recognition of cultural diversity.

7. Globalization of the world economy presents opportunities and challenges for the development process as well as risks and uncertainties. As a result of the process of globalization and growing interdependence in the economic, social and environmental fields, an increasing number of issues cannot be effectively addressed by countries individually. Therefore, international cooperation is required. Furthermore, non-State actors with a global reach, such as transnational corporations, private financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, have important roles to play in the emerging network of international cooperation.

8. Greater interdependence among States has accelerated the international transmission of macroeconomic policy decisions and therefore their effects throughout the global economy. This is particularly true for the development prospects of the developing countries, which have been particularly affected by globalization.

9. Global financial integration presents new challenges and opportunities for the international community. Sound domestic macroeconomic policies of each

country in regard to promoting macroeconomic stability and growth are primary elements for determining private capital flows, and the coordination of macroeconomic policies, where appropriate, and a favourable international economic environment play an important role in reinforcing their effectiveness. The globalization of financial markets can generate new risks of instability, including interest rate and exchange rate fluctuations and volatile short-term capital flows, which require all countries to pursue sound economic policies and to recognize the external economic impact of their domestic policies. There is a need for the expansion of private capital flows and for broader access by all developing countries to these flows, and therefore the need for the international community to assist low-income countries, especially those in Africa, in their efforts to create an enabling environment necessary to attract such flows.

10. Increasing the capacity to respond to these trends requires sound domestic policies as well as a favourable international economic environment. Although new growth poles are emerging in a number of developing countries which will provide an increasing share of the stimulus to world development, it is likely that the role of the developed countries in world finance will remain preponderant for a long time. The policies they follow in their domestic affairs will, in the increasingly globalized capital markets, be of decisive importance for the rest of the world as they have a significant influence on world economic growth and, consequently, over the international economic environment.

11. Notwithstanding the importance of a favourable international economic environment, ultimately each country bears primary responsibility for its own economic and social policies for development. In order to take advantage of a rapidly integrating world economy, all countries should adopt sound and stable domestic policies, address external and internal imbalances, and encourage a continuous process of adjustment. Sound national policies are also essential for cushioning external shocks. National policies of all countries would also benefit from improved political institutions and legal systems. In this context, the international community should give strong support to the efforts of developing countries to solve their serious social and economic problems and should promote a favourable international economic environment for development.

12. Globalization and interdependence are deepening the need and creating greater opportunities for international cooperation. The problems and questions which globalization and interdependence bring in their wake, show that there clearly exists a shared, common interest among all countries in solving and answering them. International development cooperation, not only founded in solidarity, but also based on mutual interest and partnership, forms an essential part of this effort. With the waning of ideological confrontations, the rise in globalization, and the deepening of interdependence among nations, the historic opportunity has arisen for constructive dialogue among all countries, in particular among the developed and developing countries, and political mobilization for the promotion of international cooperation for development based on genuine partnership and mutuality of interests and benefits. This Agenda for Development manifests our commitment to grasp this opportunity.

13. The deepening interdependence among countries has already led to the emergence and strengthening of regional economic groupings and arrangements. They are recognized as important catalysts for global economic growth and expansion of trade. They offer a framework for fostering and enhancing cooperation among States not only on economic policy but on other areas of

common concern as well. Regional economic groupings and arrangements which are outward oriented, supportive of and complementary to the multilateral trading system are important actors in the global development process.

(b) Variety of development experiences and impact of globalization

14. Development experiences among countries reflect differences with both progress and setbacks. A number of developing countries have experienced rapid economic growth over the recent past and have become dynamic partners in the international economy. These countries, which maintain a high rate of economic growth, have increased their share in world trade and foreign direct investment, thereby expanding their role in the global economy.

15. At the same time, developing countries continue to face difficulties participating in the globalization process. Many risk being marginalized and effectively excluded from the globalization process. Many of them continue to be mired in poverty, hunger and malnutrition, and economic stagnation, including slow or negative economic growth. The global changes in finance, communications and technology have largely by-passed them, despite their efforts of undertaking economic reforms, including structural adjustment programmes. The gap between the developed and developing countries remains unacceptably wide. Imbalances and uncertainties continue to exist in the global economy which affect all countries but in particular the interests of the developing countries. We reiterate the need for broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the international economic decision-making process.

16. The development spectrum ranges widely not only among countries but also within countries. The varied country situations indicate that in addition to overall measures needed for the promotion of a favourable international economic environment for development, there is a need for specific measures in particular country situations. Success will often depend on the removal of key constraints which vary greatly from country to country. Cooperation among developing countries and sharing their experiences can greatly contribute to achieving such success. It also requires that international development cooperation has to take into account the respective plans, programmes, needs, priorities and policies of developing countries. A new international partnership is required for development at the national, subregional, regional and international levels.

(c) Critical situations and special problems in developing countries:

- Critical situation in Africa
- Critical situation in the least developed countries
- Special problems in small island developing States
- Special problems in landlocked developing countries

17. The critical socio-economic situation in Africa is of priority concern. Africa is the only region where poverty is expected to continue to increase substantially. Much of the continent suffers from, inter alia, inadequate physical and institutional infrastructure, poor human resource development, lack of food security, malnutrition, hunger, widespread epidemics and diseases, and unemployment and underemployment. These conditions are further compounded by a number of conflict and disaster situations. All these diverse limitations and constraints make it difficult for Africa to fully benefit from the processes of globalization and liberalization of trade and to integrate fully in the world

economy. Increased mobilization of domestic and external resources for development, as well as their more effective use, are critical for the success of the economic and political reforms undertaken by African countries. International solidarity is fundamental to Africa's development and international cooperation and support must necessarily complement the national resources mobilized by the African countries themselves.

18. The critical situations of the least developed countries, which are particularly marginalized from the world economy, require the priority attention of the entire international community, in support of appropriate domestic economic and social policies. The heavy burden of debt and debt service on their economies, deterioration in the terms of trade, decline in real terms in recent years in the overall level of official development assistance (ODA) and limited flows of private resources are some of the main factors that impede the already limited opportunities for these countries to participate in and benefit from the process of globalization and liberalization. By most measures of economic and human well-being, the least developed countries lag seriously behind. Their social indicators are consistently low and have worsened in some cases. Their institutional and physical infrastructure is fragile and therefore enhanced national and international support are required to strengthen them.

19. The special problems of small island developing States also need to be given priority attention by the international community. The special challenges and constraints to their development arising from, inter alia, their limited market size and resource base, from their particular transportation and communication problems, and from their high degree of vulnerability to natural and environmental disaster need to be addressed.

20. Lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by remoteness and isolation from world markets, prohibitive transit costs and risks impose serious constraints on the overall socio-economic development efforts of the landlocked developing countries. The special challenges and constraints specific to these countries need to be addressed.

(d) Post-cold war realities and challenges

(i) Special problems and features of countries with economies in transition

21. The special problems and features of countries with economies in transition require particular attention in the post-cold war era. The dual transition to democracy and to a market economy makes their situation especially complex particularly regarding their economic growth and sustainable development. This ongoing process is guided by and based on the respect for human rights, transparent, representative and accountable governance, the rule of law and civil peace.

22. Considerable strains are put on the social fabric of these societies of the countries with economies in transition. Structural adjustments bring economic benefits but are causing social problems which were unknown before the transition. Severe environmental degradation, a worsening population situation and the problem of conversion of military production to civilian in these countries are of primary concern.

23. The completion of the transition process and the integration of these countries in the world economy and their effective involvement in the multilateral institutions will have a positive impact not only on these

countries themselves but also on the global economy. Thus, it is especially important for them to promote effective cooperation in trade, economy, finance, science and technology with all countries and regions. Their integration should contribute to economic cooperation with developing countries and to mutually beneficial exchanges of scientific and industrial know-how. Increased cooperation among countries with economies in transition will also be important. In order to bring this integration about in a speedy manner, effective international support for reforms in these countries is essential both in terms of financial resources and of institutional expertise. The measures that should be undertaken in this regard must ensure the maximization of the benefits from and the minimization of the negative effects of trends in the world economy for all countries in particular for developing countries.

(ii) The end of the cold war and the developing countries

24. While the end of the cold war has fostered a new spirit of dialogue and cooperation at the global political level, there is a need to improve the international economic environment so that it is more conducive to the socio-economic development of developing countries, including through the fulfilment of commitments agreed to at the recent major United Nations conferences.

25. In the post cold war situation, the record of development is so far a mixed one. The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round on multilateral trade negotiations, the consensus on development arising from recent major United Nations conferences and the expansion in private flows to developing countries are positive developments. On the other hand, the recent decline in real terms of ODA, the deterioration in terms of trade and the risk of marginalization from the world economy of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, are particular concerns. The international community and multilateral financial institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) should focus their attention on ways to address these concerns effectively.

(e) Democracy, transparent and accountable governance, and the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development

26. The waning of ideological conflicts has improved the climate of cooperation at all levels. Although there is no universal prescription for successful development, a consensus has emerged, inter alia, that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework of our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. In this context, we reaffirm that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

27. Respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic and effective institutions, combating corruption, transparent, representative and accountable governance, popular participation, an independent judiciary, the rule of law and civil peace are among the indispensable foundations for development. At the same time, we reaffirm that the right to development is a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of human rights. As stated in the Declaration on the Right to Development, the human person is the central subject of development. Development facilitates the enjoyment of all human rights, but the lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of internationally recognized human rights.

28. Efforts to reinforce democratic institutions and actions are vital for achieving peace and economic and social progress. Social stability, needed for productive growth, is nurtured by conditions in which people can readily express their will. For this, strong national institutions of participation are essential.

29. The existence of widespread absolute poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and renders democracy and popular participation fragile. It is unacceptable that absolute poverty, hunger and disease, lack of adequate shelter, illiteracy and hopelessness should be the lot of over one billion people. We commit ourselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world through decisive national actions and international cooperation as an ethical social, political and economic imperative of humankind.

30. Democracy, which is spreading everywhere, has raised development expectations everywhere. Lack of their fulfilment risks the rekindling of non-democratic forces. Structural reforms that do not take social realities into account could destabilize democratization processes as they exacerbate the reaching of that fulfilment. While it is recognized that States have the primary responsibility in securing a sound and stable national political, economic and social environment for development, international support, at the request of interested Governments, and the creation of a favourable international economic environment are crucial ingredients in this effort.

31. It is increasingly recognized that the State's role in development should be complemented by other relevant actors of the civil society, including the private sector. The State has the overall responsibility in various areas, including, inter alia, social, economic and environmental policy formulation, and for creating an enabling environment for the private sector; the State should encourage effective participation by the private sector and major groups in activities which complement and reinforce national objectives.

32. Every State has an inalienable right to choose its political, economic, social, and cultural systems, without interference in any form by another State. By virtue of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, all peoples have the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

B. Objectives

1. Strengthening international cooperation for development

(a) Implementing all international agreements and commitments for development

33. The new opportunities, challenges and risks opened by the globalization and growing interdependence in the world economy, the critical situation and special problems in many developing countries and the special problems of economies in transition heighten the need for strengthened international cooperation. A strong political will is essential to sustain such cooperation. Through this Agenda, we renew our commitment and seek to impart new vigour to a global partnership for development.

34. The international community has convened over the past five years or so a number of major conferences and meetings which have adopted decisions and made commitments on key development issues aimed at reinvigorating the development process and international cooperation for development. These include the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the World Summit for Children, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Cartagena Commitment, Agenda 21 and the various consensus agreements and conventions adopted before, at, or after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the Global Conference on Small Island Developing States, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the World Food Summit.

35. These conferences bear witness that the United Nations system is and should continue to be more actively involved in the full spectrum of development issues. The accords, commitments and internationally agreed targets reached at these conferences should be fully implemented by all States and international organizations. Only through full implementation can we give credence to the notion that these development initiatives are truly a priority issue for the international community.

36. Such implementation requires foremost political will by all actors at all levels. Too often the gap between what has been agreed and what has been implemented leaves much to be desired both at the national and international levels. The commitments we have made individually and collectively need to be fulfilled if the development needs of all countries, particularly of the developing countries, are to be addressed effectively.

37. To this end we reaffirm, through this Agenda for Development, the continued relevance of the agreements reached at these international conferences and other meetings of the United Nations and stress the need for an integrated, interrelated and coherent implementation and coordinated follow-up to these conferences.

(b) Enhancing the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system in development

38. As we approach the twenty-first century, it is the collective responsibility of the international community to ensure that within the multidimensional and integrated character of its mandate the United Nations system is equipped to show leadership in the fulfilment of the commitments made on international cooperation for development, and to serve as a forum for the expression of global goals and as an advocate for the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development and the protection of the environment, as well as to respond to humanitarian assistance requirements and to maintain peace and international security.

39. The United Nations system, by virtue of its global reach, its universal membership, its impartiality and the unique and comprehensive mandate reflected in its Charter has a vital role to play in the development process. Enhancing

this role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency requires a continuous focus on development issues and ensuring its sound financial basis.

40. The wide array of issues which the United Nations system addresses, is reflected in its various functions, such as those of the specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and the regional commissions. Each part of the system has a specific role to play in addressing these issues. Relative strengths and weaknesses among the various parts of the system cannot be ignored. Enhancing the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system has to take these basic facts into account and programmes should be concentrated on areas where particular needs and the special capacity of the Organization converge.

41. However, overarching these considerations of efficiency and effectiveness of delivery, is the political dimension of the development agenda. The United Nations is unique because it conducts international political debates on all issues in the economic, social and related fields. These debates should provide political impetus to other fora to undertake the necessary policies and measures. Hence, the United Nations political interaction not only with Member States, the specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and the regional commissions, as well as with organizations such as the World Trade Organization, but also with non-state actors should be intensified with a view to enhancing effective action and coordination among them in the economic, social and related fields.

42. This Agenda for Development sets out a new framework for international cooperation, defines the role of the United Nations, and how both can make a particular contribution, and sets out the development priorities as well as time-frames for implementation and keeps the implementation of the development agenda under political review.

2. Promoting development based on an integrated approach

43. Sustained economic growth is essential for expanding the resource base for development and hence, for economic, technical and social transformation. It generates the required financial, physical, human and technological resources. It is also essential to the eradication of poverty. An open and equitable framework for trade, investment and technology transfer, as well as enhanced cooperation in the management of a globalized world economy and in the formulation and implementation of macroeconomic policies, are critical for the promotion of growth and development. While the private sector is a motor for economic growth, the government has an active and essential role in the formulation of economic, social and environmental policies.

44. In order to ensure an integrated approach to development centred on human beings and to achieve sustainable development, economic growth on its own is not sufficient and environmental protection cannot be considered in isolation from the development process. The goal of development is the improvement of human well-being and the quality of life. This involves the eradication of poverty, the fulfilment of the basic needs of all people and the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development. It requires that Governments apply active social and environmental policies, and the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of democratic and widely participatory institutions.

45. Investments in health, education and training are particularly critical in the development of human resources and should be pursued in such a way that everyone, both women and men, are given an equal opportunity to participate actively and productively in the development process. The improvement of the role and status of women, including their empowerment, is central to all efforts to achieve sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. Diversion of resources away from social priorities and needs should be avoided and, where it has occurred, be corrected. Basic social programmes and expenditures, in particular those affecting people living in poverty and the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of society, should be protected from budget reductions. When formulating and implementing structural adjustment policies and programmes such considerations should be taken into account.

46. Development is and should be centred on human beings. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework of efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. As the well-being of human beings depends on all facets of development, a multidimensional approach to development is essential. Therefore, any formulation of strategies, policies, and national, subregional, regional and international actions has to be based on an integrated and comprehensive approach. It is in this spirit that we frame this Agenda for Development. All of the areas identified for action are closely interrelated for implementation of this Agenda.

II. POLICY FRAMEWORK, INCLUDING MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

47. An encouraging development in recent years has been the almost universal pursuit of increased economic openness and integration. This has contributed to a growing economic and social interdependence among countries. It is a common responsibility and in the common interest to ensure that these trends continue and also to ensure that all countries benefit from them. The last point is fundamental: the benefits attributable to these various changes have been widespread, but they have been neither universal nor achieved without costs. A primary objective of the implementation of this Agenda should be to contribute in such a way that the benefits stemming from future growth and development are distributed equitably among all countries and peoples.

48. Achieving and maintaining an international environment favourable to all countries is in the interest of all countries. Global economic, environmental and social issues can be approached effectively only through a constructive dialogue and genuine partnership among all countries. This requires a recognition not only of the mutuality of interests and benefits but also of common, though differentiated, responsibilities. This mutual understanding has permeated the ongoing sequence of United Nations world conferences and summits.

49. However, some of the commitments and agreements for development, including those referring to international development cooperation, resulting from these conferences and summits, as well as from previous international undertakings, remain to be fulfilled. These commitments, as well as the new and additional priority actions identified here, should be implemented in the spirit of solidarity and partnership. In this context, efforts should be made to mobilize public support for development cooperation, inter alia, through a strategy based on partnership between developed and developing countries, which incorporates, as appropriate, mutually agreed goals for development.

A. Economic development

1. Macroeconomic policies geared towards sustained economic growth and sustainable development

50. National developmental policies should be formulated in conformity with national needs, conditions and development priorities and should take into account the lessons learned from decades of development experience. Among the latter, the dynamic role of the private sector and the contribution of human resource development in creating wealth figure prominently. The challenge for public authorities is, inter alia, to develop and implement policies that are conducive to prosperity, eradicate poverty and conserve the environment.

51. To this end, Governments should encourage a supportive environment for the private sector, including active competition policies, the application of the rule of law, an open framework for trade and investment and sound fiscal and monetary policies. In the area of finance, policies need both to promote domestic savings and to attract external resources for productive investment. For both purposes, it is necessary to improve the efficiency of domestic financial markets. Addressing the needs of people living in poverty, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of society and the creation of more and better jobs requires attention to be given to conducive macroeconomic policies and to such issues as human resources development, gender equality, public participation and social integration. Social and environmental factors should be considered as important elements to be taken into account by all countries in the formulation and implementation of macroeconomic policies. Particular attention should be paid to the effect of structural adjustment programmes on people living in poverty and on disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of society.

52. Increased economic integration and interdependence places greater responsibilities than before on all countries, but particularly the developed countries, to contribute to ensuring that their domestic policies are favourable to economic growth and development in the rest of the world. National and international actions are closely interrelated and should be seen as mutually reinforcing components of the overall goal of achieving development. In order to foster a supportive international environment for development, countries should pursue economic stability, full employment, a low rate of inflation, sustainable external and internal balances, including the avoidance of excessive budget deficits, low long-term real interest rates and a measure of exchange rate stability. They should also ensure open financial and commercial markets and, where appropriate, provide concessional aid flows.

53. International cooperation in the formulation and implementation of macroeconomic policies should be reinforced with a view to promoting greater coherence and consistency of domestic policies and thereby enhancing their effectiveness. Measures should also be taken to broaden the cooperation among monetary authorities in order to maintain a sound international financial system. This enhanced cooperation should take full account of the interests and concerns of all countries. Multilateral surveillance should correspondingly address the policies and measures of all countries.

2. International trade and commodities

54. The growing, though far from complete, integration of all countries in world trade and investment represents an historic structural change in international economic relations. In recent years, developing countries' trade

has increased, largely as a result of their liberalization policies concerning trade and investment. The expansion of developing countries' markets appears to be creating a virtuous circle in which mutually beneficial liberalization of trade and investment can become major means for generating the resources necessary for development.

55. The liberalization of trade regimes and the promotion of an open and secure multilateral trading system are central requirements for the promotion of economic development. All Governments should commit themselves to the liberalization of trade and investment policies and should foster international cooperation towards this goal. All countries have a shared interest in an open, ruled-based equitable, non-discriminatory transparent and predictable multilateral trading system. While many provisions in this area have been identified by the General Assembly, over the last five years, the agreements as represented by the World Trade Organization (WTO) are particularly important. In this regard, the WTO dispute settlements mechanism is a key element for the credibility of the multilateral trade system. The Commitments agreed in the Final Act of the Uruguay Round should be implemented fully. Unilateral actions of a protectionist nature, inconsistent with multilateral trade agreements, should be avoided and prevented. Appropriate monitoring measures should be established to ensure that, in the implementation of the Uruguay Round, the rights, interests and concerns of all countries are protected, recognized and redressed.

56. There is a need to promote greater integration in the world economy of those countries which have not yet benefited from the overall increase in trade and investment flows, in particular African countries and the least developed countries. Special attention should be given to the full implementation of the specific provisions for the least developed countries, including the provisions emanating from the Marrakesh agreements, and to the needs of the net food-importing developing countries, so that all countries benefit fully from the results of the Uruguay Round. These measures will also require domestic efforts to promote greater diversification of these countries' trade and to increase the competitiveness of their trading sectors.

57. Efforts to make trade and environment policies mutually supportive in favour of sustainable development should continue. Trade liberalization measures should be complemented by sound environmental policies, but measures adopted for environmental purposes should not become a means of arbitrary and unjustifiable trade discrimination or a disguised form of protectionism. In the same vein, social concerns should not be used for protectionist purposes.

58. Commodity exports continue to play a key role in the economies of many developing countries, especially in terms of their export earnings, the livelihoods of their people, and the dependence of general economic vitality on these exports. This makes the continuing deterioration in their terms of trade of special concern, even if there is some recent evidence of improvement in the prices of some primary commodities. Increased participation of developing countries in the processing, marketing and distribution of their commodities, if accompanied by improved market access, provides an alternative means for ensuring greater value added, as well as predictability and increased export earnings, from commodity production. This diversification will require such countries to continue their macroeconomic, trade and investment policy reforms.

59. It will also require a strong commitment by the international community to support such policy reforms. The international community should endeavour to improve the functioning of commodity markets, with greater transparency and more

stable and predictable conditions. There should be further evaluation of the usefulness of commodity agreements in this regard, taking into account the potential of new financial and trading instruments and techniques. Improved market access for primary commodities, especially in their processed forms, should be provided, particularly by developed countries. They should also respond favourably to requests for technical assistance aimed at enhancing the diversification of the export sector in those developing countries which are highly dependent on the export of a limited number of commodities. The strengthening of multilateral compensatory financing schemes is a further means of addressing the short-term difficulties that can arise as a result of heavy dependence on commodity exports.

60. UNCTAD must build upon its comparative advantage and offer support appropriate to the needs of developing countries to ensure that they participate in the world economy on a more equitable basis. The policy research and analytical work of UNCTAD must illuminate the changes in the global economy as they relate to trade, investment, technology, services and development. This work should be undertaken in cooperation with WTO and other relevant international institutions.

3. Issues of internal and external finance

(a) Mobilization of domestic resources for development

61. Both domestic and external resources are required for development. In most countries, domestic savings contribute by far the larger part of the resources utilized for investment and are mainly mobilized through national fiscal and monetary policies, including equitable taxation and fiscal incentives. Exploring new ways of generating new public and private financial resources, inter alia, through the appropriate reduction of excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures and the arms trade, and investments for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to allow possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development will be undertaken.

62. The experiences of those developing countries which have achieved high rates of economic growth in recent years show that sustained economic growth is linked to an effective strategy for domestic resource mobilization. These economies have maintained significantly higher rates of national savings and investment than other developing countries. However, some developing countries have limited scope for increasing savings because of their low per capita income levels and because levels of consumption are already low and are difficult to restrain further; these countries will continue to need substantial external resources as an important complement to domestic efforts to stimulate their development.

(b) External resources

63. Total net resource flows to developing countries have expanded rapidly in the 1990s. However, the trend has not been universal, in terms of either the types of financing or the recipients. Within the total, official (public sector) flows have languished; all the growth has been accounted for by an increase in the private sector component. Secondly, while some low-income countries have been the recipients of the increased private sector capital flows, others have not benefited at all.

(c) External debt

64. There is an urgent need for effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, and to help them exit from the rescheduling process. The evolving debt strategy has contributed to the improvement in the debt situation of a number of developing countries. Debt-relief measures have been undertaken by creditor countries both within the framework of the Paris Club and through their cancellation and equivalent relief of bilateral official debt. Nevertheless, external debt and debt-servicing problems have persisted, particularly for the poorest and heavily indebted countries. Debt-service problems of middle-income countries should continue to be addressed effectively.

65. Those developing countries that have continued, at great cost to themselves, to meet their international debt and debt-service obligations in a timely fashion have done so despite serious external and domestic financial constraints.

(d) Official development assistance

66. Official development assistance (ODA) is a small proportion of a country's total resources for development, but is a significant source of external resources for many developing countries, particularly African countries and the least developed countries. As such, it can play an important complementary and catalytic role in promoting economic growth. Despite its critical importance, the overall decline in ODA is a serious cause for concern.

(e) Role of multilateral financial institutions

67. The multilateral financial institutions have an important role to play in meeting the challenges and urgent needs of development and the commitments made in a series of recent international conferences. Renewed efforts should be made in order to provide them with resources commensurate with their role, while pursuing ongoing efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness. In order that international financial facilities, particularly the International Development Association (IDA), have more positive effects on development, the commitments for their replenishment should be fully implemented in a timely manner, thereby contributing more effectively to development.

(f) United Nations financing for development

68. At present, the capacity of United Nations funds and programmes to respond to the needs of developing countries is being threatened by the persistent insufficiency of resources for the operational development activities of the United Nations, in particular the decline in contributions to core resources. At the same time, the present sequence of global conferences and other international meetings has resulted in a wide range of additional development demands being imposed on the United Nations. The efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and impact of the operational activities of the United Nations system must also be enhanced.

(g) Private investment flows

69. Private resource flows to developing countries, including foreign direct investment (FDI), have increased in recent years. Key determinants for attracting external private sector capital are, inter alia, a stable domestic political, legal and economic environment, based on the rule of law, sound

economic policies and an openness to foreign investment. Other factors include the prospects for growth and a favourable external environment.

70. The growth in FDI in developing countries is of particular importance since, in addition to finance, the recipient economy usually benefits in terms of technology transfer and enhanced access to export markets. However, FDI in developing countries, as well as the recent parallel surge in international portfolio investment, has been concentrated in the more advanced economies, the larger economies and those with high rates of economic growth. This situation needs to be addressed. There is also a need to promote favourable conditions for achieving international stability in private capital flows and to prevent the destabilization arising from swift movements of private capital flows.

(h) Peace dividend

71. When the cold war ended, a peace dividend appeared at hand. The relaxation of international tensions was thought to offer opportunities for reducing military spending worldwide and for using the resources so released to enhance spending on social and economic development for the benefit of all countries. There should be an appropriate reduction of excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures and the arms trade, and investments for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to allow possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development. While the reduction in global political tensions has yielded many benefits, the impact on development has not materialized in the tangible form or to the extent that was foreseen.

4. Science and technology

72. The ability of countries to participate in, benefit from and contribute to the rapid advances in science and technology can significantly influence their development. Hence, international cooperation efforts should be intensified and strengthened towards the developing countries' endogenous capacity-building in science and technology, including their capacity to utilize scientific and technological developments from abroad and to adapt them to suit local conditions. There is a need to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and the corresponding know-how, in particular to the developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries. In this regard, the international community is called upon to meet all the objectives as reaffirmed in chapter 34 of Agenda 21.

73. Promotion of science and technology for development calls for a clear definition of the respective roles in this area of the private sector, Governments and international organizations. The private sector plays a role in the productive application of science and technology and most commercially relevant technology is controlled by the private sector. Governments play a role in ensuring that there is a propitious environment for the development, access to, transfer, adaptation and application of environmentally sound technologies, and in providing appropriate regulatory frameworks and incentives for the development of scientific and technological capabilities. Promotion of science and technology for development also requires a labour force that has the professional and technical training necessary to utilize newly introduced technologies.

74. Developing countries should further advance their collective efforts in promoting technology research, training, development and dissemination, as well as facilitating the access and exchange through information and technology centres. This development calls for the continued and enhanced support from the international community through technical assistance and financing. The international community should also continue to promote the development of effective and mutually beneficial technological cooperation between countries with economies in transition and all other countries, including in the area of new and emerging technologies.

75. International cooperation can complement national science and technology policy measures and is necessary in areas where global interests are at stake. The world community has a common interest in the development and widespread dissemination of technology geared towards environmental protection and conservation and the rational use of energy and raw materials. Governments should implement the commitments they made in Agenda 21 on this subject.

5. South-South cooperation

76. South-South cooperation is an integral and dynamic part of international development cooperation. The end of the cold war, increasing globalization, liberalization, regional cooperation, and interdependence are all making such cooperation more imperative. The countries of the South exhibit common as well as varying development experiences and know-how which offer many opportunities at the bilateral, subregional, regional, interregional and international levels for greater cooperation between them. Grasping these opportunities will result in a stronger basis for their self-reliance and development as well as provide an important complement to international development cooperation.

77. Exploiting trade opportunities among countries of the South by undertaking trade promotion activities, devising payment arrangements and expanding availability of trade information is particularly important. At the same time, there are many other areas, such as communications, information, transportation, investments, science and technology, environment, food and agriculture, population, education, and human resource development, in which South-South cooperation can be fostered and promoted.

78. Technical cooperation, arrangements to improve market access, technical and financial assistance, sharing of knowledge and technology, and exchange of information are some of the many ways and actions by which developing countries that have been able to achieve social and economic progress can assist those that have been less successful. The concept of triangular cooperation, which involves, inter alia, technical, financial and other support by developed countries and international organizations for South-South cooperation, can also make a significant contribution to the promotion of cooperation among developing countries. All these collaborative efforts should be accorded high priority and increased support from the international community and assistance from all sources, including relevant multilateral institutions and non-State actors.

6. Regional economic cooperation

79. Regional economic integration and cooperation is increasingly recognized as a means towards expanding trade and investment opportunities, and for promoting economic growth and sustainable development and other forms of cooperation

between countries of various regions. Regional arrangements can also contribute to growth of the world economy.

80. Regional economic integration and cooperation should be actively considered as a means of eliminating obstacles to trade and investment and of fostering economic cooperation within a region. However, there is the risk that regional organizations may turn inward and that the world will evolve into competing economic blocs. Therefore, reductions of barriers to trade and investment among members or participants in regional groupings should be consistent with internationally agreed rules, where applicable, and without detriment to other economies.

81. Regional economic groupings should be outward oriented and supportive of the multilateral trading system. This requires a strong commitment by the international community, in its pursuit of regional economic integration and cooperation, to open regionalism within the framework of an equitable, non-discriminatory and rule-based multilateral trading system.

82. Regional cooperation also provides a vehicle for addressing environmental and social issues of common concern. The development of common approaches to environmental problems of a transboundary nature is particularly pertinent. National efforts in combating poverty and unemployment and promoting social integration can also benefit from regional cooperation. Furthermore, possibilities could be explored to use regional forums as means of cooperation in supporting national action to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democratic institutions.

83. Regional integration and cooperation should be complementary and contributory to national policies and to global multilateralism. In order to take advantage of regionalism, multilateral economic and trade institutions must have the capacity to accommodate regional arrangements in their structures. The challenge is to use both global and regional arrangements in a mutually supportive way.

7. Development in agriculture, industry and the services sectors

84. The agricultural, industrial and services sectors need to be developed in a balanced manner. While it is recognized that the private sector is the primary contributor to sectoral development, Governments have an important role to play in creating the enabling environment for sectoral development to flourish, particularly in the agricultural and services sectors. Besides promoting a dynamic and competitive domestic economy, based on comparative advantages, and providing physical and institutional infrastructures, domestic sectoral policies should also seek to integrate the protection and conservation of the environment and the achievement of social development objectives into sectoral development plans.

85. In implementing sectoral policies, particular attention should be given to the potential of such policies to generate employment and contribute towards the eradication of poverty. In this context, the important contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises should be recognized. It is also essential to facilitate women's equal access to resources, training, employment, market and trade and to strengthen their economic capacity and commercial networks, as well as their equal access to and equal opportunity to participate in scientific and technological areas.

86. The agricultural sector remains the main source of income for the majority of the population in developing countries. Its marginalization from the overall process of economic development should be avoided. Agricultural policies should particularly aim at increasing food production, improving access to food by low-income people and enhancing the income-generating potential of agriculture. Developing countries, with the support of the international community, should promote the development of small and medium-sized agro-industries and cooperatives and improve the processing, transportation, distribution and marketing of food and other agricultural products. Governments should enhance, at the national and local levels, rural women's income-generating potential by facilitating their equal access to and control over productive resources, land, credit, capital, property rights, development programmes and cooperative structures.

87. The industrial sector constitutes one of the key factors in sustained economic growth and in achieving social objectives. In order to promote industrial development, policies in this area should be geared towards ensuring the legal and institutional framework that fosters entrepreneurship and attracts foreign investment, protecting intellectual property rights and facilitating technology cooperation. Moreover, special support should be given to the promotion and development of environmentally sustainable industry and attention needs to be directed to rural industrial development, to industrialization programmes for marginalized segments and regions, and to enhancing the role of women in industrial development.

88. The services sector is of increasing importance for the economies of developing countries. Developing countries should continue to pursue policies to create conditions for the development of their national services sector through the modernization of the necessary infrastructures. Measures should include enhancing the efficiency of domestic sectors by encouraging human resource development and by ensuring appropriate investment policies.

89. All countries should enhance the efficiency of domestic service sectors through greater internal and external competition and by ensuring the transparency, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of domestic regulations, in accordance to each country's commitments, and with the provisions of GATT, including article IV on the increasing participation of developing countries. The developing countries face a major challenge of strengthening their domestic services' capabilities to derive full benefits from the implementation of the General Agreement on Trade in Services. In this context, as reaffirmed in the ninth session of UNCTAD, appropriate technical assistance should be extended to the developing countries to develop and strengthen their service sectors to help ensure that they reap the maximum benefits from liberalization of trade in services.

90. The domestic sectoral policies elaborated by developing countries should be supported by a favourable international action. Trade liberalization should be pursued on a global basis. It should include the liberalization of market access in sectors and modes of supply of exports of interest to developing countries and should cover access to technology on a commercial basis, to distribution channels and to information networks. With the growing internationalization of the services sector, further action should be taken to facilitate the participation of developing countries in international service transactions.

B. Social development

91. Equitable social development is a necessary foundation for development and an important factor for the eradication of poverty. The commitments agreed at the World Summit for Social Development should be fully implemented.

92. The ultimate goal of development is to improve and enhance human well-being and the quality of life of all people. Social development is best pursued if Governments actively promote empowerment and participation in a democratic and pluralistic system respectful of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Efforts to sustain broad-based economic growth reinforce the promotion of social development. Processes to promote increased and equal economic opportunities, to avoid exclusion and overcome socially divisive disparities while respecting diversity are also part of an enabling environment for social development.

93. It is the primary responsibility of States to attain social development. But the international community, the United Nations system, the multilateral financial institutions, all regional organizations and local authorities, and all actors of civil society also need to contribute their own share of efforts and resources to promote social development and to reduce inequalities among people and narrow the gap between developed and developing countries. As part of these shared responsibilities, interested developed and developing country partners could agree on mutual commitments to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of ODA and 20 per cent of their national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes.

1. Eradication of poverty and hunger

94. Poverty continues to affect far too many people in the world. Hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, lack of access to safe drinking water, low access to education and other public services and resources, exclusion, lack of participation and violence are some of the many aspects that characterize poverty. Widespread poverty affects the future of societies, as children growing up in poverty are often permanently disadvantaged. The burden of poverty is disproportionately borne by women. Though poverty occurs in all countries, its extent and manifestation are particularly severe in developing countries.

95. The goal of eradicating poverty in the world is an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. It can only be achieved through a multidimensional and integrated approach, that combines programmes targeted at people living in poverty with policies and strategies that meet the basic needs of all, strengthen their productive capacities, empower them to participate in decision-making on policies that affect them, ensure access of all to productive resources, opportunities, public services, and enhance social protection and reduce vulnerability. Sustained and broad-based economic growth, social development and environmental protection are crucial for raising living standards and for eliminating poverty in a sustained manner.

96. At international conferences organized by the United Nations in the recent years, Governments committed themselves to meet the basic needs of all. High priority should be placed on achieving and monitoring the goals and targets set in the areas of education, health, food security, shelter and access to safe drinking water and sanitation, in partnership with major development actors.

97. At the Social Summit, it was decided to formulate or strengthen, preferably by 1996, national policies and strategies geared to substantially reducing overall poverty in the shortest possible time, to reducing inequalities, and eradicating absolute poverty by a target date to be specified by each country. National budgets and policies should be designed with the strategic objective of meeting basic needs, eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities.

98. The eradication of poverty requires determined national actions. At the same time, the international community, bilaterally and through the multilateral financial institutions and other international organizations, should support the efforts of developing countries in the eradication of poverty and in ensuring basic social protection.

99. Commitments and targets agreed upon since 1990 to achieve the overall goal of poverty eradication should be fully implemented by Governments, in partnership with all development actors, the United Nations system, including financial institutions, NGOs and the international community as a whole. The United Nations system should make every effort to enhance the coordination of actions relative to poverty eradication, and to support developing countries and other countries in that endeavour.

100. Hunger and malnutrition continue to be the fate of hundreds of millions of people, most of whom live in Africa and the least developed countries. Eliminating hunger and malnutrition and achieving food security are major objectives of this agenda. Therefore, the institutional structures of the United Nations system must be made more effective in this respect.

101. The key to increasing food production lies in sustainable development of the agricultural sector and in improving market opportunities. Solving the problems in developing countries calls for improving agricultural productivity, but also for financial incentives to encourage investment in agriculture. It is also important to promote secure land tenure and access to resources and technology for farmers, in particular women, whose role is crucial in food supply and food security. The macroeconomic and trade policy issues and the social factors that constrain and limit the achievement of food security in least developed countries should also be addressed.

102. The international community should support the efforts of Africa and the least developed countries to increase food security. It should strive to ensure coordinated and rapid delivery of food assistance in situations of transitory food insecurity, in full awareness of longer term national and local development objectives and of the need to improve access to food of the most vulnerable groups of the population.

2. Employment

103. Creating adequately and appropriately remunerated employment for all and reducing unemployment and underemployment are essential for combating poverty and for promoting social integration.

104. Pursuing the goal of full employment should be a basic priority of economic and social policies, so as to enable all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work. At the WSSD, Governments agreed on those common goals, and on a set of objectives, policies and strategies to achieve them.

105. Economic growth as well as the expansion of productive employment should go hand in hand. The expansion of adequately and appropriately remunerated employment and the reduction of unemployment should be placed at the centre of economic and social policies with the participation of employers, workers and their respective organizations. The basic rights and interests of workers and the quality of jobs should be ensured and the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) should be fully respected. Also essential is to ensure equal employment opportunities for women and men. Special efforts should be made against long-term and structural unemployment and underemployment, particularly among youth and women. In employment creation, employment development strategies should take into account the role of self-employment, entrepreneurship, small and medium size enterprises, and of the informal sector.

106. The United Nations should elaborate ways and means to implement, follow up and assess the outcome of the Social Summit in relation to the goal of full employment through expansion of productive employment and the reduction of unemployment. The General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council with the support of the Commission for Social Development and other relevant bodies as well as the World Bank and the IMF, should be involved in the implementation, follow-up, and assessment of international commitments on employment. The ILO, because of its mandate, has a special role to play in this regard.

3. Social integration

107. The aim of social integration is to create "a society for all", where every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. Since the founding of the United Nations, the quest for humane, stable, safe, tolerant and just societies has shown a mixed record. While progress has been achieved in many areas, there have also been negative developments, such as social polarization and fragmentation, widening disparities and inequalities of income and wealth within and among nations, and marginalization of people, families and social groups. Even entire countries have been negatively affected due to rapid social change, economic transformation, migration and major dislocations, particularly in areas of armed conflicts and violence in its various manifestations.

108. These are compelling reasons for actions by Governments, individually and, as appropriate, jointly, to foster social cohesion, while recognizing and protecting diversity. An inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, on non-discrimination, tolerance, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, respect for diversity, and on participation of all people, including the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and persons. The problems of crime, violence and abuse of and trafficking in drugs should also be addressed. International cooperation in the area of drugs should be reinforced in accordance with the Global Programme of Action adopted in the context of the international decade to fight drug abuse. In this context, the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in order to consider the fight against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, and to propose new strategies, methods, practical activities and specific measures to strengthen international cooperation in addressing the problem of illicit drugs is of the highest importance.

4. Human resources development

109. At the World Conference on Education for All and the World Summit for Social Development, Governments committed themselves to ensuring universal access to quality education, attaining the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, and to ensuring access of all to primary health care. This should include efforts to rectify inequalities relating to social conditions, race, national origin, age, disability, and between urban and rural areas. Appropriate steps should be taken to close the gender gap at all levels of education and to ensure the full access of women to health care throughout the life cycle.

110. Quality education is critical for enabling people to develop their full capacities in health and dignity, and to participate actively in the social, economic and political process of development. It is also crucial for achieving the objectives of economic development. Education and vocational training are the key to higher productivity, and allow faster and easier adaptation to technological and economic change. They are vital for job creation and combating unemployment, and for sustained growth.

111. Resolute and vigorous national actions are crucial for developing human resources. Governments have committed themselves to formulating or strengthening strategies for the eradication of illiteracy and universalization of basic education. The link between education and training and labour market policies should be strengthened, so as to facilitate the adaptation of workers and employers to changing economic conditions, technologies and labour markets. Not only should the importance of higher education and scientific research be emphasized, but also of broadening the means and scope of basic education, of enhancing the learning environment and of promoting lifelong learning.

112. From the perspective of the economy at large, it is of great importance that the requisite policies be applied to ensure human resources development, including a satisfactory level of education and training of the workforce and increasing their receptivity to technological innovations, in particular in the field of information technology.

113. Efforts to achieve the goals of national "Health-for-All" strategies, in line with the Alma Ata Conference Declaration on Primary Health Care, should be expedited. The need for an integrated and intersectoral approach to health strategies has been recognized, as well as the importance of strengthening national and international efforts to prevent and combat epidemics and other diseases that are endemic in many developing countries, and in particular to address malaria and the spread of HIV/AIDS more effectively.

114. At previous international conferences, Governments agreed upon a set of goals and objectives for national and international efforts in the area of education and literacy, and health, in particular for maternal and child health and the control of major communicable diseases. We are committed to achieving those goals within the time-frame we agreed to.

115. Enhanced international cooperation is also called for to advance human resource development. Concerted efforts should be made to support the efforts of developing countries, especially the least developed countries, and other countries in need, to develop their human resources. Developed countries have an important role to play. Human resources development and institution-building can also be promoted through cooperation among developing countries. International organizations, including the international financial institutions,

must give high priority to supporting the objectives of human resources development and to integrating them into their policies, programmes and operations. Support might include, inter alia, exchange of information, training and skill development programmes, as well as the provision of other forms of assistance.

5. Human settlements

116. More people than ever are living in absolute poverty and without adequate shelter. Inadequate shelter and homelessness are growing plights in many countries, threatening standards of health, security and even life itself. Urban settlements have the ability to support large numbers of people while limiting their impact on the natural environment. Yet many cities are witnessing harmful patterns of growth, of production and consumption, of land use, of mobility and of degradation of their physical infrastructure.

117. At the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), the international community adopted the goals and principles of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. It reaffirmed its commitment to the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing, as provided for in international instruments. The international community also subscribed to the principles and goals of equitable human settlements, in which all people have equal access to housing, infrastructure, health services, adequate food and water, education and open spaces. It affirmed that eradication of poverty is essential for sustainable human settlements.

118. Sustainable development is essential to human settlements development and gives full consideration to the needs and necessities of achieving economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Special consideration should be given to the specific situation and needs of developing countries, and, as appropriate, of countries with economies in transition. Human settlements shall be planned, developed and improved in a manner that takes full account of sustainable development principles and all their components, as set out in Agenda 21 and related outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

119. Formulation and implementation of strategies for human settlements development are primarily the responsibility of each country at national and local levels within the legal framework of each country. National plans of action and/or other relevant national programmes and actions to achieve the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development will need to be developed or strengthened, where appropriate, and their implementation will need to be monitored and evaluated by governments in close cooperation with their partners in development at the national level. There is also a need for an enabling international environment and for integrated approaches at the national and international levels to support these efforts.

120. New and additional financial resources from various sources are necessary to achieve the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. The existing resources available to developing countries - public, private, multilateral, bilateral, domestic, and external - need to be enhanced through appropriate and flexible mechanisms and economic instruments to support adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development. These should be accompanied by

concrete measures for international technical cooperation and information exchange.

121. The United Nations system, in cooperation with all States and with relevant international and non-governmental organizations also has a key role to play in promoting international cooperation on the provision of adequate shelter and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world as well as in rural areas.

C. Empowerment of women

122. While the status of women has advanced in some important respects in the past decade, progress has been uneven, inequalities between men and women have persisted and major obstacles remain to women's empowerment, with serious consequences for the well-being of all people.

123. The Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned as well as non-governmental organizations.

124. Empowering women is essential for achieving the goals of sustainable development centred on human beings. It requires appropriate public policies to ensure that women enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms and participate fully and equally in all spheres of public life, including in decision-making. Public policies to promote women's economic potential and independence and their full and equal participation in development are also essential for women's empowerment. Before decisions are taken in the areas of social and economic development and of the environment, an analysis should be made of their impact on women and men respectively.

125. Measures should be taken to ensure the full enjoyment by women and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Actions to be taken by States in this regard include fulfilling their commitments regarding the ratification of, accession to and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women so that universal ratification of the Convention can be achieved by the year 2000, and avoiding as far as possible resorting to reservations. Measures should also be taken to ensure women's full and equal access to economic resources and social services through full respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

126. Measures are needed to ensure women's equal access to education and to training and retraining. The targets set by the Fourth World Conference on Women for achieving gender equality in primary and secondary education should be implemented. Measures should be taken to ensure women's equal rights with men, equal access to economic resources and social services, including, inter alia, land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication, markets, education, and the right to inheritance. Eliminating occupational segregation and wage inequality, creating a flexible work environment that facilitates the restructuring of work patterns and the sharing of family responsibilities, are also major goals. Methods should be developed for assessing the value of unremunerated work outside national accounts. Policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women living in poverty should be reviewed, adopted or maintained in line with the recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action.

127. Measures are also needed to achieve women's full participation in decision-making processes in all walks of life and at all levels. The success of policies and measures aimed at supporting or strengthening the promotion of gender equality and the improvement of the status of women should be based on the integration of the gender perspective in general policies relating to all spheres of society as well as the implementation of positive measures with adequate institutional and financial support at all levels. Enhanced participation by women will also contribute to ensuring that all policies and programmes are designed, implemented and monitored in full awareness of their possible or actual gender-specific effects.

128. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action should be urgently implemented in its entirety. Adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources to developing countries from all available funding mechanisms to strengthen the advancement of women, are required. The implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women - aimed at achieving equality by the year 2000 - should be accelerated. Also called for is implementation of the relevant sections of Agenda 21 and of the Programmes of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development and by the World Summit for Social Development, as well as of the Geneva Declaration on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights.

D. Rights of the child

129. Children are the most important resource for the future. Greater investment in children by parents and societies is essential to the achievement of sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Therefore, the promotion, to the fullest extent, of the health, well-being and potential of all children, adolescents and youth is a crucial objective. The international community expressed its commitment to that objective when it adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child and at the World Summit for Children. We call for full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and encourage States to remove all reservations to that Convention.

130. Measures must be undertaken by States, with the support of the international community, to achieve, by the year 2000, the goals contained in the plan of action adopted at the World Summit for Children and to reach the goals set by subsequent international forums for the year 2000 and beyond. The rights of children must be ensured, with special attention paid to the particular situation of girls. Their rights to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and their rights to education must be ensured, recognizing the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents and other persons legally responsible for children to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacity of the child, appropriate direction. The efforts of developing countries to achieve those major goals must be supported.

131. Exploitation, maltreatment, child prostitution and child abuse should be combated, and the root causes of these phenomena have to be addressed. Actions are also needed for improving the situation and protecting the rights of children in especially difficult circumstances and ensuring that the vital importance of family reunification is recognized, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Programme of Action of the International Conference

on Population and Development, and taking into account the relevant provisions of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

132. Another key issue with regard to the rights of the child is child labour, which is pervasive in many parts of the world. Overall socio-economic conditions, income uncertainty, women's health and education, schooling opportunities and the size of households all have an impact on child labour. Abolishing child labour requires setting specific target dates for eliminating all forms of child labour that are contrary to accepted international standards, in particular article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, for ensuring the full enforcement of relevant existing laws, and, where appropriate, for enacting the legislation necessary to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and relevant ILO standards. In this context, priority should be given to the elimination of all extreme forms of child labour such as forced labour, bonded labour and other forms of slavery. National efforts in dealing with the problem of working children can be complemented by international support measures which may include provision of education facilities as well as compensatory support measures for their families.

E. Population and development and international migration

133. The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development emphasized the importance of translating the Conference's recommendations into actions at all levels. This will involve decisive actions by Governments and increased support from the international community. The effective implementation of the Programme of Action will require an increased commitment of financial resources, both domestically and externally. The developed countries have committed themselves to complementing the national efforts of developing countries on population and development. The Programme of Action includes commitments to increase substantially the availability of international financial assistance to the developing countries in the field of population and development in order to ensure that population and development objectives and goals are met.

134. In this connection, Governments should commit themselves at the highest political level to achieving the goals and objectives contained in the Programme of Action and should take a lead role in coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of follow-up actions. The Programme of Action endorsed the crucial role of NGOs, reflected in an effective partnership between government and NGOs in all aspects of population and development-related programmes and policies. The capacity of NGOs for entering into such a partnership needs to be enhanced.

135. The Programme of Action and Agenda 21, among others, affirm that demographic trends cannot be considered in isolation from development. Therefore, population programmes are not simply about numbers and demographic targets, but rather about the human beings who are at the centre of population and development activities. Consequently, the Programme of Action is grounded in a development and human rights framework and underscores the need to reconcile the aspirations and requirements of individual women and men with long-term development objectives.

136. Countries have learned much about the relationships between population growth and sustainable development. There is general agreement that persistent widespread poverty as well as serious social and gender inequalities have significant influences on, and are in turn influenced by, such demographic

parameters as population growth, structure and distribution. Gender equality, including full and equal access to education by women, and universal access to basic health care services, including those relating to reproductive health services, are essential to achieving population and development objectives. Furthermore, integrating population into economic and development strategies will both speed up the pace of sustainable development and poverty eradication and contribute to the achievement of population objectives and an improved quality of life of the population.

137. Successful reproductive health care, including family planning programmes, must be based on the principle of free and responsible choice of family size and child-spacing, which includes the ability of men and women to make informed decisions on the number and spacing of their children. Such choice calls for access to the widest possible range of health care programmes and services and for greater support for reproductive health services and appropriate educational programmes.

138. Concomitant support is needed for stronger, better coordinated global actions against major diseases that take a heavy toll of human lives, such as malaria, tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid and HIV/AIDS. In this context, the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS should be brought into full operation as quickly as possible and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on malaria should be implemented.

139. The international community also has a vital role to play in attaining the objectives of the Programme of Action regarding international migration and development, which reflects the special importance attached to the impact of international migration on both countries of origin and receiving States. The flow of people between countries, and indeed within countries, affects and is affected by the development process. As underlined in the Programme of Action, international economic imbalances, poverty and environmental degradation, combined with the absence of peace and security, violations of human rights and the varying degrees of development of judicial and democratic institutions are all factors in the movement of people.

140. There is a need to formulate or strengthen measures at the national level to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in sectors of many societies, and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies. Ultimately, the long-term manageability of international migration hinges on making the option to remain in one's country a viable one for all people. The possibility of convening an international conference on migration and development could be considered.

F. Environment and development

1. Full implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of UNCED

141. The consensus on and basis for actions at global, regional, subregional, national and local levels to ensure sustainable development has been established by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests, as well as in all international conventions on the environment and

development. Priority must be given to the prompt and full implementation of these commitments and recommendations.

142. At UNCED an integrated approach towards development and environment was adopted, whereby the protection of the environment would constitute an integral part of the development process and could not be viewed in isolation from it. Depletion and degradation of nature and its resources endanger the prospects for development, for our generation and even more so for the future generations. The cost of reversal will be far higher than the cost of prevention. Therefore, sustainable development strategies and programmes which aim at integrating environmental protection requirements into economic, social and development policies should be formulated and implemented at all levels. All States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and development policies and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, in keeping with the principles contained in the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and relevant international environment conventions.

143. Eradication of poverty should have the highest priority on the international agenda. One of the adverse effects of poverty, which affects mostly developing countries, is related to environmental and natural resource degradation. The essential task of eradicating poverty is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world. Strategies aimed at poverty eradication are also important in avoiding degradation of resources.

144. While poverty results in certain kinds of environmental stress, the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in industrial countries, which is a matter of grave concern, aggravating poverty and imbalances. Promoting changes in such consumption and production patterns should also be of the highest priority. All countries should strive to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. Developed countries bear a special responsibility and should take the lead in this area. Action is required to promote changes in unsustainable production and consumption patterns through behavioural changes and through the promotion of internalizing environmental costs and the potential use of economic instruments that can both generate revenue for financing sustainable development and send signals to the market to help change unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

145. In general, the financing for the implementation of Agenda 21 will come from a country's own public and private sectors. For developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, ODA is a main source of external funding, and substantial new and additional funding for sustainable development and implementation of Agenda 21 is required. So far, the financial resources provided to developing countries have fallen short of expectations for the means of implementation set forth in Agenda 21. All countries should honour their commitments related to financial resources and mechanisms for implementation, as laid down in chapter 33 of Agenda 21. Both domestic budgets and development assistance, including assistance by the United Nations system, should be consistent with and supportive of the objectives of sustainable development.

The potential of innovative, additional financial resources should be urgently explored.

146. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), whose additional grant and concessional funding is designed to achieve global environmental benefits, should meet the agreed incremental costs of relevant activities under Agenda 21, in accordance with the GEF instrument, in particular for developing countries. The restructured GEF with initial commitments of US$ 2 billion for three years, constitutes a first step in providing resources to address global environment concerns. The prime task now is for the GEF to pursue its operational phase in line with its agreed operational strategy, while ensuring that it continues to be consistent with the guidelines of relevant conventions. GEF procedures could be further improved to speed up project implementation without compromising the quality of appraisal and participation.

147. Another essential dimension of the UNCED commitments concerns concrete measures for the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed. The Governments of developed countries have a major role to play, both as a conduit for such transfers and by providing market incentives for the private sector. Recognizing the importance of protecting intellectual property rights and taking into account the special needs of developing countries are two essential considerations in the transfer of environmentally sound technology.

148. The UNCED process culminated in a new global partnership for sustainable development. Implementing the recommendations of Agenda 21 is essential for strengthening this partnership based on common but differentiated responsibilities. In this partnership, the special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and those most environmentally vulnerable, must receive special priority.

149. The United Nations system has a key role in stimulating and supporting countries and major groups in the implementation of Agenda 21, in helping to build further consensus and in preparing the ground for standard-setting on issues of sustainable development.

2. Implementation of international conventions on the environment

150. International legal instruments for the regulation of activities affecting the environment form an essential framework for practical efforts by the international community to reduce environmental degradation and promote sustainable development. In this context, it is important to promote further the implementation and development of international conventions in the field of environment and development, taking into account the principles contained in the Rio Declaration.

151. The full implementation of these instruments will be an important contribution to ensuring the sustainable use of land, marine and air resources, including through reduction and recycling of waste and through nature management. Governments should become parties to and comply with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, signed at UNCED. They should also become parties to and implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa; the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes

and Their Disposal; and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Countries are encouraged to sign and become parties to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and to implement this agreement. Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States is also called for.

152. Developed countries parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa should support, through fulfilling their commitments to mobilize substantial financial resources and to facilitate the transfer of technology, knowledge and know-how, the efforts of affected developing countries parties, in particular African countries, to develop and implement their own long-term plans and strategies to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought.

153. Developed country parties should fulfil their financial commitments and enhance cooperative efforts to support developing country parties in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The effective implementation of the two Conventions and their strengthening, in accordance with decisions adopted by the respective conferences of the parties, should be ensured by the parties with the support of the international community. Developed country parties should continue their efforts to support country parties undergoing the process of transition to a market economy in the implementation of these conventions.

154. Action towards sustainable development is an evolving process: additional commitments, actions and instruments may be required in the light of new global, regional and subregional or national developments and needs. But this should in no way delay the implementation of what has been agreed.

G. Humanitarian issues and development

155. Humanitarian assistance is essential for the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies, including major technological and man-made disasters. Emergency measures should be seen as a first step towards long-term development.

156. The General Assembly has recognized that humanitarian assistance must be provided with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. It has also recognized that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of an appeal by the affected country.

157. At the same time, each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory and to provide for the security of humanitarian personnel. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory. To this end, the United Nations is continuing to identify ways for strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system.

158. Many emergencies reflect the underlying crisis of development facing many developing countries which needs to be addressed by Governments and the international community if the emergency is not to recur. Therefore, in order to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of emergency situations, support is required for medium and long-term social and economic development. The implementation of commitments to sustainable development, including those related to economic growth, will contribute to the ability of developing countries to undertake disaster prevention and preparedness, including, inter alia, support for food security, strengthening health and education systems in affected countries, as well as equal access to education, the building up of national institutions, and for the rule of law as well as for strengthening the capacity of recipient institutions to manage emergency situations.

1. Continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development

159. Where emergency situations arise, rapid provision of humanitarian assistance by the international community remains, of course, imperative. However, this form of assistance must be planned with a view to an equally rapid transition to rehabilitation and reconstruction and be part of the continuum concept which aims at resuming development at the earliest opportunity. At the same time, it should be recognized that the continuum concept may require different approaches in different situations.

160. Prevention, preparedness, emergency response, economic recovery and rehabilitation are all part of a comprehensive response to reduce developing country vulnerability to emergencies. Thus far, however, the international community has mostly only been able to react to emergencies through the provision of humanitarian assistance which can only alleviate human suffering in a short-term perspective. Expenditure on relief activities should not have a negative impact on development programmes.

161. In virtually all post-emergency situations, resettlement of refugees, displaced persons and other disaster victims as well as the restoration of physical infrastructure are some of the major conditions for recovery. In cases of post-conflict peace-building situations, programmes such as demining, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants as well as confidence-building and reconciliation measures are essential for moving forward in the continuum towards development. Equally important are restoring public institutions, police and judicial systems, and resuming economic and social development in preventing possible resurgence of conflict situations.

162. Although certain intermediate phases can be established, the distinction between different stages of the emergency to development continuum is often vague. This requires a comprehensive and coordinated response not only to rehabilitation and reconstruction but also to development needs, by the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, the international community and Governments. The mandates of humanitarian agencies and development organizations must be delineated clearly in order to counter the tendency of these agencies and organizations to extend mandates, either from relief to development or vice versa, without having necessarily the institutional capacity to effectively take on such new roles.

163. In order for the international community to respond rapidly and effectively to humanitarian emergencies at the various stages of the continuum, the establishment of an international network of voluntary humanitarian relief teams

that can be deployed rapidly to cope with humanitarian emergencies, such as the white helmet initiative acting within the framework of the United Nations volunteers, could be considered.

2. Early warning, prevention, preparedness and reduction of natural disasters

164. In recent years, with, in many areas, ever larger populations at risk, disasters have had increasingly major impacts in terms of human and economic losses, impoverishment and long-term displacement of populations. The commitments of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World, adopted by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, which has defined concrete actions for disaster reduction, should be implemented.

165. Disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness are of primary importance for reducing the need for disaster relief. They should become an integral part of national strategies and programmes for sustainable development. There should be greater efforts to enhance national capabilities for early warning and disaster mitigation, which should be supported with adequate financial resources and transfer of technologies to developing countries and, as appropriate, countries with economies in transition.

166. Enhanced subregional, regional and international cooperation are essential for disaster preparedness. Prevention, mitigation and preparedness for natural disasters, and actions to implement the Yokohama Strategy, could be integrated into the country strategy note, where appropriate. A coordinated and timely preventive response of Governments, non-governmental and other organizations, and agencies and communities requires strengthening of the early-warning potential of the United Nations system.

3. Response to other humanitarian emergencies

167. Humanitarian emergency situations have become more frequent, more widespread, more complex and long lasting, combining interstate and internal conflicts, large-scale displacements of people, mass famine, disruption of economic, political and social institutions, and, in some cases natural disasters. A result has been that a growing percentage of development assistance is being devoted to such complex emergencies. There is a need to avoid the situation in which such a trend has a negative impact on long-term development programmes.

168. The response of the international community to complex humanitarian emergencies has become better coordinated, more effective and more efficient. The United Nations plays a central role in the international response to this daunting challenge, working closely with other international agencies. The creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs illustrates the determination of the United Nations to respond more effectively to this task. The coordinating role of this Department among the various relevant agencies should be further strengthened, including by developing formal memoranda of understanding with them.

169. Further progress requires the provision of adequate contingency funds and the establishment of planning and logistical mechanisms to allow a faster and more effective response to complex emergencies.

170. Ways also have to be found to address basic needs during complex emergencies. Issues such as humanitarian needs of displaced persons, which are not under the direct mandate of humanitarian agencies, should also be addressed. Coordination and clear mandates and responsibilities, particularly in the field, are also essential in cases where there is a humanitarian component to a peacekeeping operation. While peacekeeping, civilian, humanitarian, economic, social, and political activities are all part of the integrated process of peace-building, special attention should be given to the observance of the norms and principles of international law, including international humanitarian law.

171. The effective delivery assistance of relevant non-governmental organizations and volunteers in situations of complex emergencies should be further recognized as an important complementary part of the coordinated international, regional and subregional response and incorporated into the programming of actions.

4. Refugees and displaced persons

172. The number of refugees and displaced persons has been rapidly increasing due to a number of complex factors which include, inter alia, armed conflicts, human rights violations, political instability, absolute poverty, social disintegration, lack of resources, and environmental degradation. Most of the refugees are located in and/or move into developing countries, often imposing an enormous burden on those States which already face difficult economic and social conditions. International support for activities of recipient countries for refugees and displaced persons is hence a necessity.

173. Some countries with economies in transition also face burdens related to refugees and displaced persons. There is, therefore, a need for the international community to support them in order to address these problems.

174. The root causes of movements of refugees and displaced persons should be tackled in a coordinated and integrated manner. A durable solution to the plight of the present large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers should be found. Their needs as regards protection in accordance with internationally recognized standards and with national law, as well as assistance, must receive the necessary support. Governments should strive to meet their basic needs, build their self-sufficiency. The conditions for voluntary repatriation of refugees and returnees in safety and dignity, and for ensuring adequate reception arrangements and smooth reintegration, should be created.

H. Participatory approach to development

175. There has been a multiplication of non-state actors in development - those of the civil society - who are playing an increasingly important role in development. The State has overall responsibility for policy formulation in the economic, social and environmental spheres, including the correction of market failures, the provision of public goods, the creation of a favourable enabling environment for the private sector as well as a favourable legal and regulatory framework. It should also encourage effective participation by the private sector and major groups in activities which complement and reinforce national objectives.

176. Participation is an essential component of successful and lasting development. It contributes to equity by involving people living in poverty and

other groups in planning and implementation. Participatory decision-making, together with the rule of law, democracy, and transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society is an important requirement for the effectiveness of development policies.

177. Full participation in society should be achieved through the promotion and protection by Governments of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, bearing in mind the interdependent and mutually reinforcing relationship between democracy and respect for human rights. Governments should make public institutions more responsive to people's needs. Therefore, full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the conclusions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action should be promoted.

178. There is a large potential benefit to be derived from increased participation. In order for it to be realized, Governments should establish institutional and legal frameworks and decentralized processes, that allow their people greater involvement in the decisions that affect their lives. This requires that Governments give adequate support to the administration of justice as well as to public administration which should be responsive to the requirements of their people.

179. Governments are encouraged, where appropriate, to decentralize their public institutions and services to a level that, compatible with their overall responsibilities, priorities and objectives, responds properly to local needs and facilitates local participation. To ensure effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their association/networks, Governments, at the appropriate levels, should review and revise, as necessary, legislation to increase local autonomy and participation in decision-making, implementation, and resource mobilization and use, especially with respect to human, technical and financial resources and local enterprise development, within the overall framework of a national economic, social and environmental strategy. Governments, when they consider it appropriate, could work on decentralization programmes with the support of donors and international institutions.

180. The key to participatory development means fulfilling the potential of people by enlarging their capabilities, and this necessarily implies empowerment of people, enabling them to participate actively in their own development. In order to fulfil their potential, people, especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, must participate actively in establishing and maintaining independent organizations representing their interests, within each country's constitutional framework. Political empowerment is an integral aspect of participatory development.

181. A vigorous civil society is indispensable for popular participation at all levels and an essential component of any successful development strategy. Community organizations, business and workers' organizations, NGOs and self-help groups must be actively involved. Governments should view them as important actors and partners in development. Greater accountability and transparency in such organizations' activities would be helpful in this regard. In countries where the participation of civil society is weak, it should be a major purpose of public policy to strengthen it.

182. Broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the international economic decision-making process is also necessary.

I. Actions related to countries in special situations

183. International cooperation for development should take account of countries' development experiences and circumstances in formulating and implementing comprehensive development approaches.

184. Action on many fronts is needed. A combination of grant aid, concessional loans and technical assistance which can contribute to the financing of the necessary economic and social infrastructure, together with strategies designed inter alia to increase exports earnings, attract foreign direct investment and reduce external debt, can provide sufficient conditions for development.

185. The critical situation of Africa and the least developed countries requires that priority should be given to those countries in international cooperation for development and in the allocation of ODA. These countries should implement at the national level structural adjustment policies which take into account social development goals as well as effective development strategies that create a more favourable climate for trade and investment, give priority to human resources development and further promote the development of democratic institutions. These national efforts should be supported by the international community.

1. Africa

186. The critical socio-economic condition in Africa concerns the international community as a whole and requires global partnership and solidarity to address and solve. Although Africa is faced with enormous problems, it also has great potential, both in human and natural resources, for economic growth and development. The obstacles to the socio-economic development of Africa are well known. Tackling these problems and paving the way to accelerated and self-sustaining growth and sustainable development through decisive implementation of commitments and actions have, however, been lacking.

187. The external debt problems of African countries require further attention. The measures taken by the Paris Club, including the Naples terms, should be further implemented in a full, constructive and expeditious manner. Effective, equitable, development oriented and durable solutions have to be found in the problems of external debt and the burden of debt, which continue to impede the socio-economic development of African countries despite measures taken on both a bilateral and multilateral basis to reduce or reschedule their debt.

188. The international community should reaffirm its commitment to give full support to the development efforts of Africa. This requires, inter alia, measures to contribute to durable solutions to the external debt and debt-service problems, to increase foreign direct investment, to enhance national capacity-building, to deal with the shortage of domestic resources for development and to facilitate the integration of the African countries into subregional and regional trade as well as into world trade.

189. The international community should support African countries so that they benefit fully from the results of the Uruguay Round and to mitigate any adverse effect of the Final Act. It is essential to implement the measures decided upon in the Final Act and the complementary provisions specified in the Marrakesh Agreement, in favour of least developed countries and concerning the possible negative effects of the reform programme on these countries and on the net food-importing developing countries. In this regard, there is urgent need for

financial and technical assistance to African countries to enable them to evaluate the impact of the Final Act and to identify and implement adaptive measures to enhance their competitiveness and trade performance in order to benefit from the Uruguay Round. In addition, it is essential to support the efforts of African countries to diversify their economies. New export capacities and opportunities have to be created and diversification across markets and products should be encouraged. The call for financing the preparatory phase of commodity diversification projects and programmes should be pursued. State participants in the African Development Fund and multilateral institutions are urged to pay special attention to the diversification of African commodities and to contribute to the preparatory phase of African diversification projects. In order to support effectively efforts to diversify commodity exports and boost earnings, the international community, particularly the major trading partners, should continue to commit themselves to granting enhanced market access to Africa's exports through substantial reduction in or removal of trade barriers and through preferential arrangements, in accordance with the Uruguay Round Agreements.

190. There is an urgent need for concerted and better coordinated international action on the myriad of adverse socio-economic factors which compound poverty in Africa and hamper its prospects for growth and development. This includes addressing effectively and comprehensively the issues of conflict resolution, including post-conflict peace-building and the continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development; stronger and better coordinated global actions against major diseases that take a heavy toll of human lives; and alleviating the effects of natural disasters through programmes on early warning, preparedness, prevention and mitigation. The international community should also assist African countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and meet basic human needs.

191. The United Nations system also has a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities which address the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the follow-up of the outcome of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and other related initiatives.

2. Least developed countries

192. Despite the adoption of the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, there has been a decline in real terms of total ODA for LDCs and there has been continued marginalization of these countries, and their number has increased from 41 to 48 without a proportionate increase in support measures despite national and international efforts. Reversing the further marginalization of the least developed countries and achieving their integration in the world economy are essential for their growth and development and pose a major challenge to the international community.

193. In order to succeed, the full support of the international community is required. Appropriate economic and social policies are also required and technical capacity and physical and institutional infrastructure need to be built up. Special support should therefore be given to the least developed countries in their development efforts, in order to facilitate their integration into the world economy, to enable them to participate in and to allow them to fully benefit from the process of globalization and liberalization of trade and the increase in international private resource flows.

194. In view of their limited domestic resources, the least developed countries will continue to need enhanced external financial assistance and other support. Achieving the accepted United Nations target for official development assistance to the least developed countries of 0.15 per cent of donor countries' GNP is particularly urgent. Donor countries which have not met this target should make their best efforts to reach it as soon as possible, and donor countries which have met the 0.15 per cent target should undertake to reach 0.20 per cent by the year 2000. Further improvements should be made in aid coordination and effectiveness.

195. Many LDCs face serious debt problems and more than half are considered debt distressed. Most of their debt is owed to official creditors, both bilateral and multilateral. The serious debt problems of LDCs necessitate continued efforts in the framework of the international debt strategy. This strategy includes concrete measures to alleviate the debt burden and economic policy measures, which will be critical to the revitalization of growth and development. Those LDCs should continue to benefit from substantial debt relief schemes. Paris Club creditors are invited to continue to implement fully, constructively and expeditiously the very concessional treatment under the Naples terms, and the Bretton Woods institutions are encouraged to expedite the ongoing consideration of ways to address the issue of the multilateral debt, including those concerning the LDCs.

196. The international community should support LDCs so that they benefit fully from the results of the Uruguay Round and to mitigate any adverse effect of the Final Act. It is essential to implement the measures decided upon in the Final Act and the complementary provisions specified in the Marrakesh Agreement, in favour of the LDCs and concerning the possible negative effects of the reform programme on these countries and on the net food importing developing countries. Urgent steps are needed to provide enhanced market access to major markets for products originating from LDCs. There is also scope for further improvement of the GSP schemes and other supportive measures in favour of LDCs.

197. In 1990, through the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the international community agreed on measures to revitalize the development of the least developed countries. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, and other relevant conferences, agreements and conventions, further commitments have been made to support the efforts of these countries. At the mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in the 1990s, concrete measures and recommendations were agreed on to implement the Programme of Action. They should be operationalized and implemented as appropriate. The international community must give high priority to the full and timely implementation of the Programme of Action and fulfil all its commitments in favour of the least developed countries.

3. Small island developing States

198. The international community, international organizations and the United Nations system should cooperate in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and of Agenda 21, and support their economic transformation. This requires adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually

agreed, and promoting fair and non-discriminatory trading arrangements. Appropriate exchanges among small island developing States and between them and other States with similar development experiences are also to be encouraged. The GEF should constitute an important channel of assistance to small island developing States in responding to their special needs and vulnerabilities.

199. The sustainable development of small island developing States requires concrete action by the international community to address the constraints to their development outlined in the Programme of Action and in Agenda 21. It also requires a supportive international institutional framework, including a strong monitoring and review role by the Commission on Sustainable Development. Appropriate support should be given to the SIDS/NET and SIDS/TAP programmes, which are important instruments for technical cooperation and for promoting information exchange.

4. Landlocked developing countries

200. Specific action at national, bilateral, subregional, regional and international levels should be taken as a matter of urgency and priority, to address the special development problems and needs of landlocked developing countries. To that end, international support, through appropriate technical cooperation and financial assistance by developed countries and multilateral financial and development institutions is needed to enhance the capacity of the landlocked developing countries to effectively participate in the rapidly globalizing world economy, including global trading, investment and technology transfer processes.

201. Particular emphasis should be given to the cooperative and collaborative efforts of the landlocked and transit developing countries in dealing with the transit problems, inter alia, through improving the transit transport infrastructure facilities and bilateral agreements to govern transit transport operations; development of joint ventures in the area of transit transport; and strengthening of institutions and human resources dealing with transit transport. Active and consistent efforts are called to implement the Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries and the donor community endorsed by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. Since most transit countries are themselves developing countries facing serious economic problems, their efforts at developing a viable transit infrastructure also need financial and technical support.

5. Countries with economies in transition

202. The international community should continue to give attention to the needs of countries with economies in transition, and support in particular their efforts to integrate into the world economy. A number of international meetings and conferences, including those held under United Nations auspices, have recognized the specific needs of these countries in various areas of development and the necessity to provide them with temporary assistance upon their request aimed at the solution to the most acute problems. Such recommendations should be fully implemented by the international community and the United Nations system. To this end, an appropriate strategy should be defined for strengthening solidarity with these countries, taking into account the need to preserve the United Nations system's high priorities in development, in particular international development cooperation.

J. Means of implementation

203. The effective implementation of this Agenda, as well as of the decisions and commitments reached at the recent series of United Nations global conferences, summits and other meetings, requires the urgent mobilization and more efficient use of resources for development. It is critical to generate the political will to mobilize and make available the necessary resources - public and private, financial and human, national and international - if all States, the United Nations system and the international community as a whole are to mount a full and effective response to this Agenda. In formulating this response, attention has to be given to both the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of development as well as to time-frames for implementation.

1. Mobilization of domestic resources for development

204. All countries should continue to implement policies and measures to mobilize domestic resources according to national strategies and priorities and to achieve an appropriate level of domestic savings. Measures should include the maintenance of sound fiscal and monetary policies, efficient and equitable taxation systems, low budget deficits and an efficient allocation of budgetary resources in which due priority is given to productive expenditure.

205. Political institutions and legal systems that ensure the equitable distribution of domestic resources enhance the effectiveness and flexibility of national policy frameworks. Public expenditures offer significant opportunities for promoting growth and the equitable redistribution of resources.

206. All countries should explore new ways of generating new public and private financial resources, inter alia, through the appropriate reduction of excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures and the arms trade and investments for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to allow possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development.

2. External resources

207. The savings efforts of developing countries, in particular African countries and the least developed countries, to generate sufficient domestic savings need to be supplemented by external resources so as to raise investment to the levels necessary for adequate sustained economic growth. New and innovative ideas for generating resources for development should be explored.

(a) External debt

208. The international community, including the international financial institutions, is invited to continue to explore ways of implementing additional and innovative measures to alleviate substantially the debt burdens of developing countries, in particular of the highly indebted low-income countries, in order to help them to achieve sustained economic growth without falling into a new debt crisis.

209. In this context, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative (HIPC) endorsed by the Interim Committee of IMF and the Development Committee of the World Bank and IMF - which is designed to enable eligible heavily indebted poor countries to achieve a sustainable debt situation through coordinated action by

all creditors on the basis of adjustment efforts by the debtor countries - is welcomed. It is recognized that the implementation of the Initiative requires additional financial resources from both bilateral and multilateral creditors without affecting the support required for development activities of developing countries. The importance of implementing the Initiative's eligibility criteria flexibly so as to ensure sufficient coverage of the heavily indebted countries is stressed.

210. All the members of the Paris Club are encouraged to implement fully the initiatives which aim at substantially reducing the bilateral component of the debt burden of the poorest and heavily indebted countries and at permitting countries sufficiently advanced in an adjustment strategy to exit from the rescheduling process. To achieve the first aim mentioned above, the Paris Club should continue to apply the Naples terms in a full, expeditious and constructive manner in order to contribute to a durable solution to the debt problems of these countries.

211. Private creditors and, in particular, commercial banks should be encouraged to continue their initiatives and efforts to address the commercial debt of developing countries.

212. The international community should implement fully the appropriate actions identified in the mid-term global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s concerning the external debt problems of those countries.

213. Multilateral debt accounts for a high proportion of the external debt of a number of heavily indebted developing countries. The international financial institutions are invited to examine further proposals to tackle the problems of a number of developing countries with regard to multilateral debt, taking into account the specific situation of each country. Such proposals need to preserve the preferred creditor status of the multilateral financial institutions, in order to ensure that they can continue to provide concessional financing for development to developing countries.

(b) Official development assistance

214. It is important to reverse the overall decline in ODA flows and to achieve internationally agreed ODA targets as soon as possible. Such assistance should focus on developing countries, with particular priority to Africa and the least developed countries. Some donor countries have achieved or exceeded the accepted United Nations targets to allocate 0.7 per cent of GNP for overall ODA and 0.15 per cent of GNP for ODA for the least developed countries and are encouraged to continue to do so. Other developed countries reaffirm the commitments undertaken to fulfil as soon as possible these targets. Countries which are in a position to do so should strive to augment their assistance in the framework of development cooperation. Countries should also honour their commitments in Agenda 21 to provide resources to promote sustainable development.

(c) Role and resources of multilateral financial institutions, including regional development banks

215. The multilateral financial institutions should continue to play a major role in development and in promoting the stability of the international financial system. In their responses to the development needs, priorities and specific circumstances of developing countries, the World Bank and IMF should

continue to adjust to the wide-ranging changes in global circumstances. Their programmes should respond to the economic and social conditions, concerns and needs of each country, and should also explicitly include social development goals, in particular eradicating poverty, promoting productive employment, enhancing social integration, and supporting people living in poverty and vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society. To this end, they are urged to increase cooperation with other development activities of the United Nations system. At the same time, both the World Bank and IMF need an enhanced capacity to fulfil their roles effectively. In particular, resources for the International Development Association (IDA) should be replenished adequately and in a timely manner.

216. Regional development banks should continue to play an important role in the financing of development. In this context, the adequate and timely replenishment of their concessional mechanisms is essential. Regional development banks should respond effectively to development priorities.

(d) United Nations financing for development

217. The fulfilment of the United Nations system's role in development and in promoting development cooperation requires resources to be provided on a sound, predictable, continuous and assured basis. The international community should support the development efforts of the United Nations system by providing a substantial increase in resources for operational activities commensurate with the needs of the developing countries and the overall resources of the United Nations. This requires both political commitment by all States and an appropriate balance in terms of resources devoted to all United Nations activities and to development. New approaches to financing the international development cooperation activities undertaken by the United Nations, including innovative funding sources, should continue to be examined.

(e) Private investment flows

218. Special attention should be given by all countries to measures aimed at promoting international investment flows and enhancing their contribution to development. In order to encourage domestic investment and to attract FDI, it is essential to have in place a stable, supportive, effective and transparent legal framework. Intellectual property protection is an essential component of an environment conducive to the creation and international transfer of technology. Investment agreements which signal that investment is valued and that all investors will be treated fairly also promote investment. Governments in the developed countries should facilitate long-term investment flows to developing countries. All countries should take measures to ensure that these flows have a positive impact on development, equitable growth, productive capacity, infrastructure, transfer of technology, eradication of poverty, trade expansion, employment and social programmes.

219. The globalization and growth of financial markets has given rise to the need for improved measures to address the negative effects of the volatility of international capital flows. The prevention of financial crises will require enhanced early warning mechanisms, including improved and effective surveillance of national and international financial market developments. If prevention fails, responding to financial market distress will require enhancing the capacity of multilateral institutions to respond in a quick and coordinated fashion. Financial mechanisms need to be developed for this purpose as well as to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. In this context, the international community should explore ways to broaden appropriate enhanced

cooperation and, where appropriate, coordination of macroeconomic policy among interested countries, monetary and financial authorities and institutions, so as to enhance preventive consultation arrangements between such institutions as a means of promoting a stable international financial environment conducive to economic growth, particularly in developing countries, taking into account the needs of developing countries as well as situations that may have a significant impact on the international financial system.

3. Qualitative aspects of development cooperation

220. The quantitative efforts set out above should be complemented with measures to improve the qualitative aspects of international development cooperation, particularly: a better focus on its distribution; greater national capacities to coordinate national and international resources; improved national ownership of externally financed programmes; international cooperation based on national priorities, involving other development partners, including civil society; and strengthened national capacities to plan for, manage, monitor and evaluate the impact of development cooperation.

221. To translate the Agenda for Development into practical action, it is essential that further steps are taken to enhance United Nations performance in development. Maintaining adequate levels for funding for United Nations operational activities must be coupled with continued improvements in their performance, including monitoring and evaluation and the measurement of output rather than input.

4. Capacity-building

222. If development activities are to have a lasting impact, the future provision of technical cooperation must focus on strengthening national capacities rather than using international expertise, which is often expensive, and procuring equipment tied to aid. The United Nations system needs to scrutinize whether its activities contribute to the promotion of national ownership and capacity-building. Such promotion should be the central objective of its field level activities.

223. The international community, including the United Nations system, shall give preference, wherever possible, to the utilization of competent national experts or, where necessary, of competent experts from within the subregion or region or from other developing countries, in project and programme design, preparation and implementation and to the building of local expertise where it does not exist.

224. National execution should be the principal modality for the implementation of programmes by the United Nations system. The pace at which national execution is utilized by recipient countries must depend upon their needs and capacities. Effective national execution also requires both the United Nations system and other actors involved in the provision of technical assistance to give increased priority to assisting recipient countries in building and/or enhancing the necessary capacity to undertake services at the field level.

225. The need to promote capacity-building and national execution should be taken into account in the design stage of development programmes. Governments will need to take a lead role in identifying such needs at the planning stage and in ensuring that there is adequate national ownership of the programmes as

well as in maximizing projects and programmes efficiency by keeping overhead costs to a minimum.

226. The United Nations system must also be prepared to address the capacity requirements of different national development partners, including, in addition to Government, members of civil society, such as the private sector, and NGOs.

227. When building national capacities a number of issues will need to be taken into consideration. These include the articulation of clear development goals, strategies and priorities that are nationally prescribed and supported, where necessary, by external partners; effective performance of functions through a well-trained human resource base; competent organizations and management to effectively utilize and retain skilled people; a policy and institutional environment that can facilitate the performance and accountability of the public sector and other national institutions; and sensitivity to the overall social, economic and cultural environment in which capacity development is to take place.

228. Technical and economic cooperation among developing countries is an instrument that can make important contributions to building national capacities through exchange of information, experiences and expertise.

III. INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES AND FOLLOW-UP

A. Strengthening of international cooperation for development

229. The international community is entering a new and challenging phase in invigorating the institutions in support of international cooperation for development. Globalization, liberalization and interdependence have become key features of the world economy. In addition, economic growth and progress in a growing interdependent world are influenced by the process of globalization. Particular attention should be accorded to national and international action to broaden the benefits of the process of globalization and to avoid the risk of marginalization of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in the world economy. For developing countries, the most important challenge is the realization of development, which, among others, calls for economic growth and favourable external conditions. International cooperation for development is more than ever acknowledged as a necessity that derives from recognized mutual interest. Therefore, it is necessary that such cooperation be strengthened. In this effort the United Nations occupies a central position and key role.

230. The United Nations system has a crucial role to play in international cooperation for revitalizing development. In this regard, the United Nations has convened a number of global conferences on major issues. From these conferences, a consensus has emerged on a multidimensional, comprehensive and integrated approach to development which recognizes, among others, that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. Fulfilling the goals and commitments reached at major international conferences, particularly on international cooperation for development, is essential if development is to materialize to its fullest extent and in all its facets. There is, therefore, a need to revitalize the system of international cooperation for development which plays an important role in realizing these goals and commitments.

231. Among the many actors in international development, the United Nations, because of its unique universal character and impartiality and because of its physical presence in many parts of the world, plays a central role in promoting international development cooperation. Through this Agenda, recommendations are made for a stronger, more effective and efficient United Nations so that it and the United Nations system as a whole can contribute better to development in all countries, in particular the developing countries, through the strengthening of its role in all relevant fields of international development cooperation. Institutional issues must, therefore, be addressed while safeguarding the transparent, democratic and truly universal character of the Organization and taking into account the overall ongoing processes of reform of the United Nations.

B. Role of the United Nations in development

232. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization aims at the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of sovereign equality of all its Members, equal rights and self-determination of peoples and at achieving international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character. The role and functions of the United Nations in international economic and social cooperation, as defined in the Charter and as further elaborated in various international agreements, including in the outcomes of major United Nations conferences, range wide and deep and should be fulfilled.

233. Among the key characteristics of the United Nations are its universal membership and comprehensive mandate. The United Nations occupies a unique position for addressing the challenges of promoting development in the context of the globalization of the world economy and deepening interdependence among nations. It must play a central and more active and effective role in promoting international cooperation for development and providing policy guidance on global development issues. The responsibilities of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields should be fulfilled, taking into account the importance of its activities in these spheres vis-à-vis those in other fields.

234. The United Nations constitutes a unique forum for building international consensus on global priorities for which there exists no substitute. Forging consensus and commitments through, inter alia, various international conferences, on international economic, social and related issues is one of the most important functions of the United Nations system. To this end, the capacity of the United Nations and its various bodies to undertake analytical and policy-oriented work in the economic and social fields must be fully utilized.

235. The United Nations is also singularly well placed to forge international consensus in the field of development through intergovernmental processes and instruments. Furthermore, the United Nations plays a prominent role in raising public awareness and in promoting and advocating internationally agreed principles and commitments, and their implementation, in this context. It also implements concrete programmes which aim to respond to developmental and humanitarian needs and to promote social justice and the protection of the environment through its activities at the field level and through the collection and dissemination of information.

236. The United Nations has the unique mandate to address issues of peace and development in an integrated manner. In addition, the United Nations has a vital role to play in mobilizing the international community to respond in a comprehensive and coordinated way to rehabilitation and reconstruction but also to longer-term development needs in connection with humanitarian emergency situations. At the same time, a balance should be ensured between these activities and the Organization's consideration of and actions on development issues.

237. The United Nations, in cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, other bodies of the United Nations system, including its specialized agencies, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), has a key role in fostering greater coherence, complementarity and coordination in economic policy-making at the global level, including, inter alia, macroeconomic policy issues, and in ensuring the principles of transparency and effective participation and representation, as well as the effective implementation of internationally agreed policies and goals. In this context, the respective competencies of these institutions should be taken into account.

238. An important feature of the United Nations is its operational activities for development in the field. Their fundamental characteristics should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary, and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the needs of the developing countries in a flexible manner. The United Nations development system should take into account the specific needs and requirements of the countries with economies in transition and other recipient countries. Furthermore, because of its mandate, the Organization is well suited to promote a balanced approach to development. Therefore, the challenge for the United Nations and its funds and programmes is to effectively support Governments, particularly those of the developing countries, in their efforts to address increasingly complex issues of development in an interdependent world.

239. The Organization will become more effective and relevant in responding to the needs of the Member States only as a result of ensuring adequate and predictable funding; high-quality performance in the field of international cooperation for development; transparency and full accountability to its Member States; revitalization of its institutional structures; avoidance of overlapping and duplication; and responsiveness to changing conditions and trends.

240. There is a need for a clear relationship between the policy work of the United Nations and its operational role.

C. Enhancing the role, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system in development

241. Over the past 50 years the United Nations system has grown and expanded in the economic, social and related sectors. Through its activities the system has contributed significantly to the development process. The Organization should respond more effectively to changing development needs particularly to the needs of enhancing international cooperation for development and promoting the development of the developing countries. Strengthening system-wide coordination of activities and institutions will contribute to enhancing the role, capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency of the United Nations system in development. In this context, building collaboration between national Governments, regional and other multilateral agencies in support of country driven processes should be taken into account.

242. Essential to improving the coordination and focus of the United Nations system's development activities is to ensure that it is guided by a clear set of priorities and strategies identified by the General Assembly, with the support of the Economic and Social Council, and that incorporate the outcomes of recent major international conferences. Also essential is that the Council has the capacity to fulfil its role in overall coordination in the economic, social and related sectors, and in guidance of operational activities.

243. Efforts are needed to continue the process of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, the Council and its subsidiary bodies, the United Nations Secretariat, and other parts of the United Nations system as well as the framework for operational activities. Furthermore, achieving greater coordination, coherence and complementarity among related activities and/or improving linkages between them will also contribute to strengthening the United Nations system's organizational structure.

244. Ensuring complementarity and avoiding overlapping and duplication of work between the Assembly and the Council, including its functional commissions, is of particular importance for an effective and coordinated follow-up of major United Nations conferences.

1. General Assembly

245. The General Assembly is the highest intergovernmental mechanism for the formulation and appraisal of policies in the economic, social and related fields, and the main forum where Governments pursue the development dialogue in its political context. This dialogue aims at both promoting an integrated view of matters relating to the economic, social and related fields, thus fostering the deeper political understanding needed for enhanced international development cooperation, and at generating impulses for action and launching initiatives. The Assembly should exert greater policy leadership on development issues inasmuch as the Charter of the United Nations provides the Assembly with broad mandates concerning these issues.

246. Measures have to be identified to enhance the ability of the debate in the General Assembly to generate substantive solutions to specific policy problems and to take an integrated approach to development. To facilitate discussion based on an integrated approach to development issues, the possibility should be explored of choosing a principal theme or themes in order to focus substantive debate under each "cluster" in the agenda without prejudice to the right of delegations to raise any other specific issue in the debates.

247. In the strengthening and revitalization of the Assembly, this body should consider, in the context of all its main Committees, promoting the use of innovative mechanisms, in accordance with its rules of procedure, such as panel discussions with delegations and interactive debates with the active participation of Secretariat and agency representatives as well as outside experts.

248. Better use should be made of the forum of the Assembly to deal with major economic, social and related issues. The Assembly has the overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the results of United Nations conferences and facilitating and reviewing progress achieved. In this context, the Assembly should provide policy guidance and carry out on a periodic basis an overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the conferences. Such

conferences should be complementary to the Assembly's in-depth consideration of major issues of concern to the international community.

249. At the same time, for the Assembly to fully perform its Charter role measures also have to be taken in addition to the strengthening of the Assembly itself and to ensure that priorities set by the Assembly are fully implemented and followed up by the entire United Nations system. The policy guidance role of the Assembly in promoting international cooperation to solving international problems of an economic and social character should be fully exercised in all areas of development, including macroeconomic issues.

250. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as a principal organ of the Assembly has a contribution to make to strengthening policy-oriented debates in the Second Committee.

2. Economic and Social Council

251. In accordance with relevant provisions of the Charter, the Economic and Social Council must continue to strengthen its role as the central mechanism for coordination of the United Nations system and its specialized agencies and supervision of subsidiary bodies, in particular its functional commissions in the economic and social fields. The ongoing efforts to reform the Council call for more effective procedures and review of its work programme and working methods and should result in an increased capacity of the Council to provide overall guidance, monitor and coordinate the United Nations development system. These reforms should be allowed to take root and be built upon.

252. In this context, the Council should:

(a) Consider, in a high-level segment with ministerial participation, major issues for international cooperation in the economic, social and related fields. The high-level segment should be used for improving the synergy between the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. In doing so, the Council should also contribute towards enhancing the interaction between the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO;

(b) Ensure a coordinated follow-up to the implementation of major United Nations conferences through its subsidiary machinery and providing overall guidance and coordination to the United Nations system as a whole in the economic, social and related fields. A strengthened coordination function also requires a closer interaction between the Council and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), which should include in its reports to the Council action-oriented recommendations to improve United Nations system-wide coordination on issues for consideration by the Council;

(c) Fully exercise its role as the overall coordinating body of all United Nations development funds and programmes. This should include providing guidance to the Executive Boards of funds and programmes and monitor the implementation of General Assembly policies and guidelines, including operational aspects of the follow-up of major United Nations conferences. The Council should promote greater coherence and closer interaction between the work of its subsidiary bodies and the work of the United Nations funds and programmes;

(d) Encourage its subsidiary bodies to improve their working methods as it has been mandated by the Assembly;

(e) In the context of its general segment, whose primary function is that of an action-oriented review of the activities, reports and recommendations of its subsidiary bodies, avoid a repetition of the debates held in those bodies and focus attention on major policy issues that require a prioritized and coordinated response from the United Nations system as a whole.

253. The Bureau of the Council should play an active role by meeting regularly, including by convening open-ended informal consultations of the Council. The Bureau shall brief the Council on its deliberations and shall not have the authority to make decisions on any substantive matters. The Bureau should be encouraged to continue its role as facilitator.

(a) Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council

254. The Council should fully exercise its authority vis-à-vis its subsidiary bodies. Better guidance by the Council to its functional commissions and expert groups and bodies is particularly important. The functional commissions should in a coordinated way be able to give the best possible support to the Council in its role of providing overall coordination and guidance and in the follow-up of major United Nations conferences. It is therefore crucial to ensure that these commissions, groups and bodies can effectively serve as catalysts for action.

255. In the case of the functional commissions with primary responsibility for the follow-up and review of the implementation of a major conference, the Council shall ensure the harmonization and coordination of their agendas and work programmes by promoting a clearer division of labour among them and providing clear policy guidance to them. Within their respective mandates, functional commissions should focus on the core issues relating to the Conference for which they are responsible and obtain inputs from other relevant bodies on related issues.

256. The Council shall undertake a review of its functional commissions, expert groups and bodies as mandated by the relevant sections of annex I to General Assembly resolution 50/227. Following this review, which the Council should complete by the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, the Council should continue to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of its subsidiary bodies.

(b) Regional commissions

257. The regional commissions play an important role in bringing the work of the United Nations closer to specific development situations and concerns of countries and regions. This would include fostering economic cooperation, economic integration and economic development, by providing the Assembly, through the Council, with substantive analytical and policy oriented work, and in assisting countries in each region in the implementation and monitoring of recommendations of conferences as well as other commitments. The United Nations should also give a stronger focus to regional problems and prospects in the socio-economic fields in a cost-effective manner. For this purpose, the regional commissions should be more fully utilized, in accordance with their respective mandates. In this context, the results of the review mandated by the Assembly should be taken into account. The Council shall ensure the active participation of the regional commissions in its examination of the follow-up of major conferences. The Council shall also encourage the regional commissions, under the guidance of their member States, to continue to undertake their own management and functional assessment for adjusting their priorities, mandates, tasks and structures taking into account that numerous other regional institutions have been created.

3. United Nations funds and programmes

258. United Nations funds and programmes are important vehicles for advancing development cooperation. There is need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries, which should be addressed urgently and expeditiously. Innovative sources of funding could be an additional element for the provision of resources for operational activities for development. The urgent and specific needs of the low-income countries, in particular the least developed countries, should receive priority allocation of grant resources of programmes and projects provided through the funds and programmes.

259. The United Nations operational activities for development should be implemented by the funds and programmes in accordance with Assembly resolutions adopted, particularly in the context of the triennial policy review of operational activities. The Council should provide overall guidance to the funds and programmes in accordance with policies and priorities formulated by the Assembly. The funds and programmes should build capacities for national execution in recipient countries and should seek out, as appropriate, expertise of the specialized agencies with a view to improving the quality of services and carry out cooperation activities more effectively and efficiently. Memoranda of Understanding that clearly outline individual responsibilities and areas of cooperation have proved useful and should be encouraged between related funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

260. The roles of the funds and programmes should be periodically reviewed with a view to ensuring their responsiveness to the needs of Member States and improving the quality and impact of the United Nations operational activities. The efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the operational activities of the United Nations system must be enhanced by, inter alia, a substantial increase in their funding on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries, as well as through the full implementation of relevant Assembly resolutions. At the same time, operational activities should be country-driven, carried out for the benefit of recipient countries at their request and in accordance with their own policies and priorities.

261. The United Nations system has made a serious effort to improve the impact of its development assistance at the country level. Efforts have been and continue to be made to improve the functioning of funds and programmes at the country and headquarters levels. However, further simplification and harmonization of rules of procedure used by the United Nations development system in its operational activities is called for, in particular by the promotion of greater consistency in the presentation of budgets at the headquarters level, as well as in sharing administrative systems and services in the field, where possible, and in developing common databases in consultation with national Governments. The country programming cycles of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF should also be harmonized.

262. National plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities within the United Nations system, which should be country-driven. In this context, individual mandates and complementarities of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations development system should be taken into account. Also, the country strategy note - which remains a voluntary initiative of the recipient countries - should

be formulated by interested recipient countries with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations system, under the leadership of the resident coordinator, in all recipient countries where the Government so decides. Reform efforts, in accordance with relevant Assembly resolutions, should aim at, inter alia, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of United Nations assistance at the country level including through the resident coordinator system. The Secretary-General, in support of the intergovernmental process, has an important role to play in this respect. The resident coordinator, in full consultation with Governments, should facilitate a coherent and coordinated United Nations follow-up to major international conferences at the field level.

4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

263. UNCTAD is the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. Having a comparative advantage in tackling trade-related development issues, UNCTAD should continue to facilitate the integration of developing countries and countries with economies in transition into the international trading system, in a complementary manner with WTO and to promote development through trade and investment in cooperation and coordination with the International Trade Centre, relevant institutions of the United Nations system and other international organizations.

264. UNCTAD, as part of the United Nations system and as a contributor to its revitalization, has adopted far-reaching reforms, as embodied in the Midrand Declaration and the document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development" (see TD/377), adopted by consensus at the ninth session of the Conference, thus adapting itself to new economic and institutional modalities created by the process of globalization, the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations agreements and the creation of WTO. These reforms should be implemented, take root and be built upon, in accordance with the decisions taken at the ninth session of the Conference.

265. The efforts of UNCTAD to facilitate the integration of developing countries, in particular the least developed, particularly those in Africa, into the global economy and the international trading system are important for the successful implementation of the Agenda for Development. The tenth session of the Conference, to be held in Thailand in the year 2000, should provide an opportunity to assess progress made and to advance the global partnership for growth and development.

5. Specialized agencies of the United Nations system

266. Specialized agencies as defined in chapter IX of the Charter play a vital role in furthering the implementation of various aspects of the global consensus on international cooperation for development and in promoting and securing the international cooperation needed. Activities, priorities and basic programmes of specialized agencies should be periodically assessed in order to ensure that they remain relevant to the interests of their Member States. In accordance with Article 58 of the Charter, the Organization shall make recommendations for the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies. The Secretary-General is invited to make recommendations thereon.

267. Mechanisms should be elaborated to enable the Council, within its mandate, to provide guidance to the specialized agencies and to transmit institutional priorities as formulated by the Assembly. The specialized agencies and the United Nations funds and programmes should engage in a focused dialogue with the Council with a view to identifying how their activities can be adjusted in response to such priorities. The Council should also provide appropriate recommendations in order to ensure coherence and complementarity of efforts of all bodies, taking into account the role of the funds and programmes.

268. Efforts are also called for to enhance the transparency of the operations of the agencies. Cooperation and coordination on themes of common interest among the specialized agencies, and where appropriate between these agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system need to be strengthened. The effectiveness and efficiency of activities of the Council also could be improved by increasing interaction with specialized agencies, including the provision of regular reports to the Assembly, through the Council, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter. In this regard, it will be essential to effectively monitor the follow-up of the conclusions of the Council by the different entities of the United Nations system.

269. Cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system in providing effective support in the field of industrial development is essential. In this context, the ongoing process of reform and revitalization pursued by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) should lead to better defining and enhancing its role and to raising the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the activities of the United Nations system in the field of industrial development in line with the priorities of its member states.

6. Secretariat

270. The structure and functioning of the Secretariat and the support services that it provides in the economic, social and related fields are important and must be strengthened and improved in order to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in the field of development. They cannot be considered in isolation from the overall management structure, desired lines of authority and decision-making processes of the Organization. In particular, a dispersion of efforts and resources leading to unnecessary overlapping of responsibilities and fragmentation of the decision-making processes in the Secretariat should be avoided. Furthermore, the relationship of the Secretary-General with the specialized agencies is crucial and needs to be further enhanced.

271. Ways and means should be explored in accordance with priorities set by the Assembly to reallocate the savings resulting from reform and improved overall cost effectiveness with a view to strengthening United Nations development activities. The Secretary-General is requested to present proposals to this end.

272. It is acknowledged that the Secretary-General, as the chief administrative officer of the Organization, is responsible for the functioning of the Secretariat in accordance with the Charter. The restructuring of the Secretariat is a vital part of the revitalization of the United Nations role in the economic, social and related fields. In order for the United Nations to act more effectively in support of development with greater coherence, coordination and complementarity, further reform should be aimed at:

(a) Ensuring a comprehensive and effective implementation of the objectives of the Agenda for Development and of the relevant objectives of the Charter and the mandates entrusted by the policy-making organs;

(b) Rationalizing the structure of the Secretariat in such manner that would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its work, avoid duplication, meet the requirements of Member States, and ensure accountability in its operations;

(c) Ensuring transparency and effective implementation of recruitment procedures, principles and practices; ensuring the exclusively international character of the staff; and securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity as well as a more effective application of the principles governing the recruitment of staff, including recruitment on as wide a geographical basis as possible, respecting the relevant articles of the Charter;

(d) Ensuring that any reorganization of the economic and social departments of the Secretariat and other proposals for Secretariat reform preserve and promote the independence, intellectual diversity and visibility of the United Nations in policy analysis;

(e) Ensuring that initiatives for Secretariat reform consider measures already adopted and allow for these to take root. The restructuring of the Secretariat should be conducted in a manner that effectively meets the requirements of Member States and takes fully into account the development concerns of all Member States, in particular of the developing countries;

(f) Giving consideration to decentralization, as appropriate, from headquarters to the regional and field levels, including the regional commissions, in order to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to provide stronger focus on regional problems and prospects in a cost-effective manner, taking into consideration the ongoing process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

7. Reporting

273. Reports to intergovernmental bodies should be concise and action-oriented. Where necessary, intergovernmental bodies should make efforts to rationalize and simplify reporting procedures. All documentation should be provided within the specified timetables and in all official United Nations languages.

8. Inter-agency coordination

274. Better inter-agency coordination within the system is essential to support the goals of the Agenda for Development. This includes coordination and cooperation on themes of common interest and identification of respective strengths and weaknesses in order to ensure a more effective and efficient role of the United Nations system while taking into account respective mandates. In this context, ACC should have an enhanced function for inter-agency coordination purposes for the United Nations system. ACC should bring system-wide coordination issues to the attention of the Council and make recommendations thereon. Further efforts should be made to enhance the role of ACC and its standing committees to ensure that the United Nations system operates in a coherent, coordinated and complementary manner. A systematic exchange of

information and an appropriate distribution of tasks should be ensured within the ACC machinery and with any specific inter-agency mechanism, including ad hoc inter-agency thematic task forces set up in the context of the follow-up to conferences. Full information for the Member States on the work of ACC should be made available and a wider distribution of the report of ACC should be pursued.

9. Participation of non-governmental organizations and other major groups

275. The constructive contribution of non-governmental organizations and other major groups, including the private sector, to the implementation of the Agenda for Development should be encouraged. The existing mechanisms for the involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations in United Nations activities should be fully utilized and, as appropriate, be further improved, taking into account the relevant rules of procedure of the United Nations and the outcome of the High-level Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on the Strengthening of the United Nations System.

D. Interaction between the United Nations and other multilateral development institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

276. Increased interaction and cooperation between the United Nations and the multilateral development institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO, are necessary to respond to the challenges of development. Also, cooperative working relations between the United Nations and other international organizations should be strengthened. Examples of such cooperation already exist. There is a need to develop further effective and innovative approaches to this interaction and cooperation.

277. The strengthening of collaboration between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions requires an integrated approach, encompassing a closer policy dialogue at the intergovernmental level on relevant areas of international development policy issues taking into account their respective competencies. In support of this dialogue, closer relationships should be developed between the United Nations, through the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and the Bretton Woods institutions, in particular the Interim Committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank/IMF Development Committee. In this regard, the Assembly should play a more active role in global economic matters including the deliberations on macroeconomic issues.

278. International financial and trade institutions should be more closely involved in the preparations and deliberations, when appropriate, of the high-level segment of the Council. Their heads should actively contribute to the discussion on the topic chosen for that segment. Decisions already taken by the Council to ensure their closer involvement, through, inter alia, furnishing relevant reports should be implemented.

279. A further opportunity to consider global issues of high priority and to identify areas where these institutions can mutually support their respective efforts in promoting development could be provided by high-level special meetings of the Council.

280. Concrete modalities for strengthening the exchange of information on development issues between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions should be explored. Similar modalities may also be explored with WTO. Joint meetings between the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the United Nations funds and programmes, WTO, and the Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant organizations on selected themes, including those identified by the Assembly, should be encouraged.

281. At the field level, the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions, acting in accordance to their respective mandates, should cooperate more closely, including in the areas of capacity-building and field operations, in accordance with priorities determined by recipient countries. Under the overall guidance of national Governments, they should expand, whenever appropriate, their collaboration in co-financing of field programmes and projects and explore innovative ways to combine and maximize their resources. In consultation and agreement with Governments, efforts should be made to promote complementarity between the country strategy notes, where they exist, the policy framework papers of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Bank's country assistance strategies. In channelling financial and technical assistance through multilateral development finance institutions, donor countries are encouraged to take into account the respective roles and functions of the United Nations programmes and funds and the Bretton Woods institutions so as to ensure the complementarity of development assistance.

282. In post-emergency situations, the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions must support the transition from emergency to rehabilitation, reconstruction and long-term development. To this end, coordination between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions should be improved.

E. Follow-up and implementation

283. The intergovernmental follow-up of the Agenda for Development shall be undertaken by the General Assembly as the highest intergovernmental mechanism and the principal policy-making and appraisal organ of the United Nations system. The Assembly has called for the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through partnership which should serve as an important mechanism through which the intergovernmental follow-up and assessment of this Agenda and its implementation will be conducted. Such dialogue should also be used as an opportunity to discuss new and emerging issues concerning international cooperation for development.

284. The Economic and Social Council, within its mandate, shall assist the Assembly in overseeing United Nations system-wide implementation of the Agenda and by providing recommendations in this regard. At the same time, Governments as well as regional economic integration organizations have an important role to play at their respective levels in the follow-up of the Agenda.

285. Closely related to the follow-up and implementation of this Agenda is the urgent need for an integrated, interrelated and coherent implementation and follow-up at the national, subregional, regional, and international levels of the recommendations and commitments of recent United Nations major conferences and agreements on development. The progress of the implementation of the results of those conferences should be reviewed so as to identify progress achieved as well as obstacles hindering their full and effective implementation. While Governments have the primary responsibility for the implementation of the declarations and programmes of action adopted by international conferences, the

international community, in particular the United Nations system, including the multilateral and regional financial institutions has an important role in contributing to, assisting in, facilitating, and reviewing the progress of the implementation of the results of those conferences at all levels and in further promoting their goals and objectives.

286. A strong political commitment by the international community is needed to implement a strengthened international cooperation for development as reflected in this Agenda. The mobilization of domestic and international financial resources for development from all sources is an essential component for the comprehensive and effective implementation of this Agenda. In this connection, enhanced efforts should be made for the mobilization and provision of new and additional financial resources for the development of developing countries. Despite an increase in private capital flows, official development assistance remains an essential source of external funding. Developed countries reaffirm the commitments undertaken to fulfil as soon as possible the agreed United Nations targets of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) for overall official development assistance (ODA) and of 0.15 per cent of GNP for ODA for the least developed countries. Donor countries that have met the 0.15 per cent target will seek to undertake to reach 0.20 per cent. Further efforts are also needed to improve the effectiveness of ODA and to focus such aid on the poorest countries.

287. Due consideration should be given to modalities for conducting an intergovernmental dialogue on the financing of development, taking into account the recommendation by the Secretary-General.